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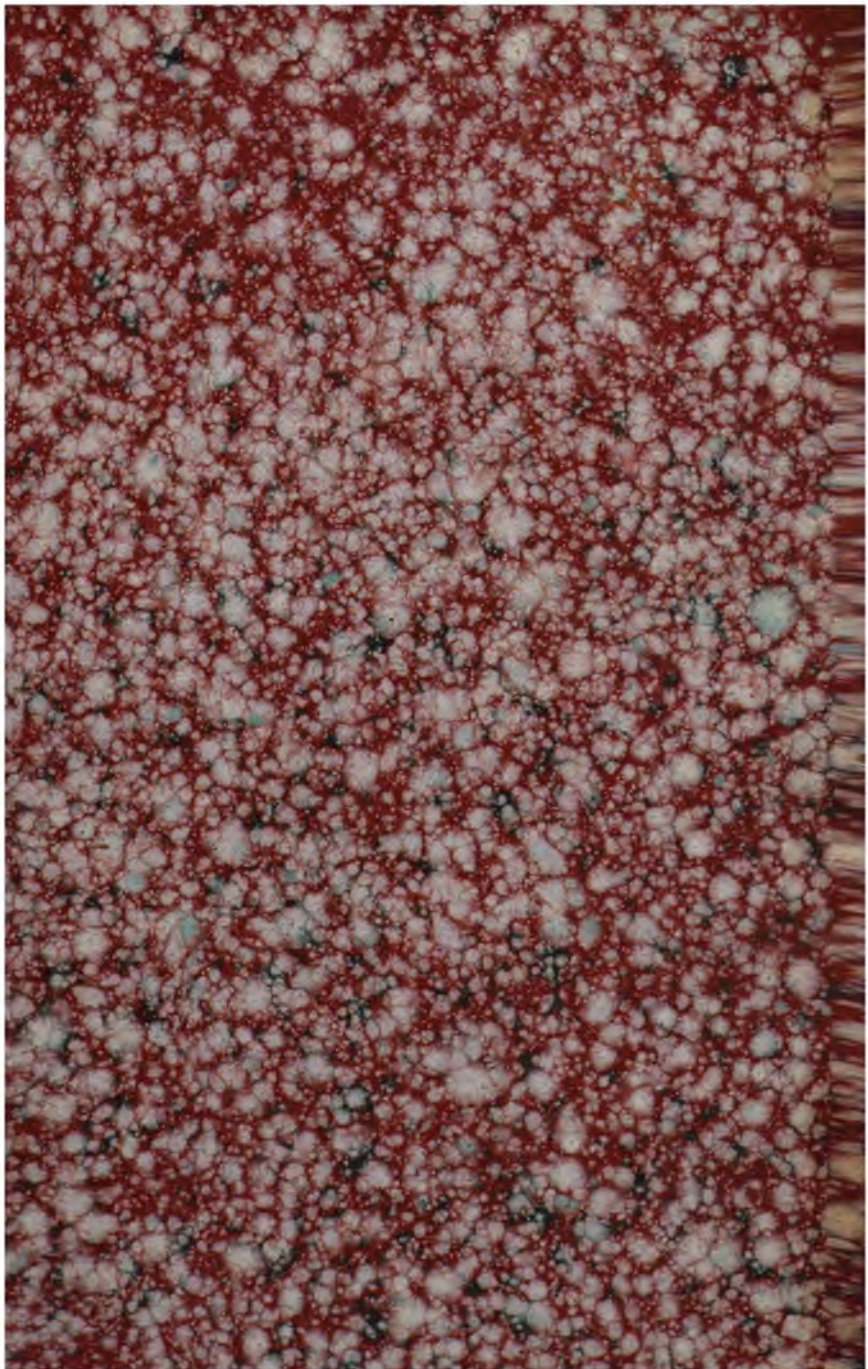


































**AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIR**  
**OF**  
**THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.**

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**VOL. II.**



\* \* *The FRONTISPIECE to this Volume is taken by the Woodbury  
Type Company from a Photograph by Messrs. Ross and  
Pringle, of Edinburgh.*









THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, 1862.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE

1894

WASHINGTON

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1894







AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF  
THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

AND  
MEMOIR

BY HIS SONS  
REV. DAVID K. GUTHRIE  
AND  
CHARLES J. GUTHRIE, M.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE DISRUPTION.

“THE ‘Battle of the Banner,’ which preceded the Disruption of the Scottish Church, was not fought so much on the floor of courts, either civil or ecclesiastical, as outside these; through the columns of the press, and from the platforms of public meetings.”

Thus, in a fragment written at St. Leonard’s within a few weeks of his death, and designed for incorporation with his Autobiography, Dr. Guthrie begins a sketch of Hugh Miller.\*

“Had the ten years, from 1833 to 1843,” he continues, “been spent only in the discussion of keen, subtle, and constitutional questions, and of previous legal proceedings and precedents, the Free Church of Scotland—if it ever had existed at all—would have been but a small affair. The battle of Christ’s rights, as Head of the Church, and of the people’s rights, as members of the body of which He is the head, was fought and won in every town, and in a large number of the parishes of Scotland, mainly by Hugh Miller, through the columns of the

\* The portion of this sketch omitted here, will be found in Chapter ix.



*Witness* newspaper, and by men who, gifted with the power of interesting, moving, and moulding public audiences, addressed them at public meetings regularly organized, and held up and down all the country. It was thus, to use Mr. Disraeli's phrase, we were *educated* for the Disruption, which had otherwise been a great failure.

"This is not sufficiently indicated in the 'Ten Years' Conflict,' an otherwise fair, full, and able book. In fact, the ignoring of Hugh Miller, and the influence of the *Witness* newspaper there, reminds one of the announcement of the play of *Hamlet* without the part of the 'Prince of Denmark.' This is to be regretted; because other churches, taking that history as their guide, may, in their battle for liberty, neglect to seize on, and occupy, the most influential of all positions—that, namely, of carrying, through the press and public meetings, the heads and hearts of the masses of the people.

"I feel this the more, that Hugh Miller was a member, and indeed an office-bearer, in my congregation—one of my intimate and most trusted friends. With his extraordinary powers as a writer the public are well acquainted, and to such an extent also with the details of his history, as given both by himself and others, that I need not dwell on them. He was a man raised up in Divine Providence for the time and the age. His business was to fight,—and, like the war-horse that saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha, and smelleth the battle afar off, fighting was Miller's delight. On the eve of what was



to prove a desperate conflict, I have seen him in such a high and happy state of eagerness and excitement, that he seemed to me like some Indian *brave*, painted, plumed, leaping into the arena with a shout of defiance, flashing a tomahawk in his hand, and wearing at his girdle a very fringe of scalps, plucked from the heads of enemies that had fallen beneath his stroke. He was a scientific as well as an ardent controversialist; not bringing forward, far less throwing away, his whole force on the first assault, but keeping up the interest of the controversy, and continuing to pound and crush his opponents by fresh matter in every succeeding paper. When I used to discuss subjects with him, under the impression, perhaps, that he had said all he had got to say very powerful and very pertinent to the question, nothing was more common than his remarking, in nautical phrase, 'Oh, I have got some shot in the locker yet—ready for use if it is needed!'

\* \* \* \* \*

"Dr. Hanna and I walked foremost in the vast funeral procession which accompanied his body to the grave; and many is the day since then, that we have missed that mightiest champion of the truth, who did more to serve its cause than any dozen ecclesiastical leaders, and was beyond all doubt or controversy, with the exception of Dr. Chalmers, by much the greatest man of all who took part in the 'Ten Years' Conflict.'"



That conflict issued in the Disruption of 1843. Thirty-one years have come and gone since then, and the ranks of the combatants are thinning fast. "A few more years," in Dr. Guthrie's pathetic words, "and they shall all be gone—dead and gone, all but some grey old man who, with slow steps, bending on his staff, will come into the General Assembly and will look around him to see the face of a fellow-soldier, and he will not see one. And men, moved by the sight, shall point with reverence to that hoary head and say, 'There goes the last of the Romans! That old man bore a part in the great Disruption.'" But the subject has lost none of its importance with the lapse of time; and various considerations claim for it the special attention at the present hour of all who seek a right solution of a confessedly difficult problem—the due relation between the spiritual and civil powers in a country.

With the rise and progress of the Free Church of Scotland, Dr. Guthrie's name, like Hugh Miller's, is intimately bound up. He was in his prime during the stirring period which preceded the Disruption, and threw himself with all the enthusiasm of an ardent nature, into the work that fell to his share. If, in later years, he took a less prominent part in the domestic questions of the Free Church, time only deepened his conviction of the truth of her principles, and to the close of life he was thankful to have lived in the Disruption era, and felt honoured to have



fought on such a field. "Nothing," he declared in 1859, "nothing has happened in providence to shake my conviction that God led the host that day which saw many leave the walls they had fondly loved and resolutely defended; resigning, with families dependent on them, that status and those stipends which no sensible man among us affected to despise."

His ultimate position, as a minister in the Free Church, was a logical carrying out of his early-formed convictions of the true nature and polity of the Church of Christ, whether in connection with the State or existing apart from it. The Church he held to be a spiritual society, whose alone Head is the Lord Jesus Christ, whose office-bearers hold their authority directly from Him, and whose only statute-book is the Word of God. He believed—otherwise he never would have entered her ministry—that the Church of Scotland, in obtaining recognition and endowment three hundred years ago from the State, had surrendered none of her independence. He looked upon her as, while an Established Church, yet a self-acting and self-regulating body; free to modify her constitution as increased knowledge or altered circumstances rendered it advisable; and free also, when she thought fit, to dissolve the alliance, which, after seven years of separate existence, she had formed with the State in 1567. That serious evils and abuses in connection with patronage had crept into the Church of Scotland, during the long period when, from 1688 to 1833, the



"Moderate" party were in the ascendant, he knew and keenly felt; and, from the time he had a seat and a voice in Church courts, he protested against these. But his conviction was—nor till 1843 was he forced to abandon it—that while these abuses were excrescences which had gathered on his Church's constitution, they were no part of its essence.

The causes which led to the "Ten Years' Conflict," as well as the principles which it involved, have been stated at some length by Dr. Guthrie in his Autobiography (pp. 223—229), and we shall therefore only touch on them incidentally here. As the Autobiography, however, unhappily terminates just where the history of the struggle commences, it will be necessary briefly to narrate the course of events. We confine ourselves to those incidents in which Mr. Guthrie was himself concerned; for to do more would lead us far beyond our limits. Nor is it needful: since the whole subject has been treated with equal knowledge and ability in Dr. Buchanan's "Ten Years' Conflict" and in Dr. Hanna's *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers*.\*

In his Autobiography (page 224), Dr. Guthrie has explained how, in 1834, the Church, led by those who were desirous at once to preserve patronage and yet give the people a voice in the election of their pastors, passed the Veto Law; and, further, how the working of

\* In a shorter form, the question, particularly in its bearing on present circumstances, is lucidly stated by the Rev. N. L. Walker in "Our Church Heritage," 1874. For the legal aspects of the question, we refer the reader to Mr. Taylor Innes's "Law of Creeds."



that law brought the Church into collision with the Civil Courts. The circumstances which brought about that collision were these :—

In August, 1834, Auchterarder, a parish in Perthshire, became vacant. Lord Kinnoul, the patron, thereupon presented Mr. Young, a "probationer," to the vacant living. Having preached before the congregation, Mr. Young was almost unanimously rejected; 287 male heads of families voting against him, and only three in his favour. In these circumstances the Presbytery declined to take any steps with a view to his ordination, and that conduct was approved on appeal by the Synod and General Assembly. On this, Lord Kinnoul and Mr. Young sought the interference of the Civil Court.

This procedure in itself did not seriously alarm the Church. She knew and admitted that the filling up of a vacancy was a matter involving both civil and spiritual interests. The latter—the ordination to the cure of souls—she claimed as hers alone; but the civil interest—the disposal of the benefice—she left to the determination of the Civil Court; at the same time maintaining that, by certain perfectly definite statutes, the disposal of the benefice had been made to depend upon the decision of the Church in the matter of ordination. If, however, the Civil Courts did not so construe these statutes, she would not dispute their right to disjoin the benefice from the cure of souls.

But now, be it observed, the question brought by Mr. Young before the Civil Courts was not merely as to his



right to the stipend, the manse, and the glebe. Disregarding all distinction whatever between things spiritual and temporal, he asked to have it found not only that he was entitled to the benefice, but also that the Presbytery was bound to *ordain* him, regardless of the opposition of the people, provided only they were satisfied with his moral and intellectual qualifications.

The case in the Court of Session was deemed so important, that it was argued before the entire bench of thirteen judges. Eight declared in favour of Mr. Young, and five, Lords Glenlee, Moncrieff, Jeffrey, Fullerton, and Cockburn, in favour of the Church. In connection with Lord Glenlee's decision, Dr. Guthrie wrote at St. Leonards, in a fragment designed for incorporation with his Autobiography—

“I shall not soon forget the scene which the Court of Session presented that day, when Lord Glenlee came forth from his long retirement to deliver his judgment on this great question.

“My next-door neighbour in Brown Square, we had opportunity of seeing how frail he was. He was seldom able to undertake even a drive, and was carried in and out of his carriage as helpless as a child. But age had nowise blunted or impaired his mental faculties. He still engaged in and enjoyed the pursuits of literature, both ancient and modern; and the little old man, with his withered face, might be found crumpled up in an arm-chair, absorbed in the profoundest mathematical speculations. In point of intellect, accomplishments,



knowledge of law, and legal acumen he was *facile princeps*,—admitted by all to be the foremost of the judges. He had no bias in our favour arising from his religious views; for I fancy, from what I have heard, that he made little or no profession of religion, but was imbued with the views of Hume, Gibbon, and other literati of his early days.

“It was weeks after the other judges had given their decision in our case, which was supported by the intellectual, though not by the numerical, majority of the judges, that old Glenlee was bundled out to deliver his judgment on the matter. This was looked forward to with the greatest interest. As he had no particular bias in our favour, and had never mingled in any of the controversies that were so naturally calculated to influence some of the other judges either for or against us, no man knew which side he was to espouse, although some said that Forbes (Lord Medwyn) did.

“The court was crowded to excess. The bench was full, and everybody on the tip-toe of expectation in the hope that Glenlee would be found on their side. This hope it was plain the judges opposed to us fondly cherished; for when, as we were all waiting in impatient silence, a side door opened, and the old man—his withered form swaddled in the robes of office, and his face bloodless and pale with age—came tottering in, they rose from their seats and offered him warm congratulations and shaking of hands.

“The stir occasioned by his appearance having at

---



length subsided, a profound silence filled the court. Seated in front of the gallery, beside Dr. Candlish and Dr. Cunningham, and others of our friends, with a hand up at each ear, it was but now and then that I could catch what he said, or rather faintly mumbled. For a while I could not even guess at its drift; but, like a great ship sailing into view out of the fog, we ere long discovered, to our inexpressible joy and triumph, that Glenlee was with us. I caught him telling how, in the first ages of Christianity, even the bishops were chosen by the acclamations of the people. I saw a visible elongation of the faces of those judges who had already given their voices on the other side; and, though it was slightly and slyly done, I saw Andrew Rutherford (the Solicitor-general, and our leading counsel) turn to the bench and look to Lord Moncrieff, with the smallest possible wink of his eye—small, yet marked enough to say, ‘Is not that capital?’

“We could hardly conceal our joy, nor the judges opposed to us their mortification, at this turn of affairs; for though they had all, as an expression of their respect and reverence, risen to their feet when Lord Glenlee came in, and shaken him by the hand as if this were the happiest day of their lives, they allowed the old man to rise from the bench and totter away out, so soon as he had delivered his judgment, without taking any notice of his departure.”

The decision of the majority of the Court, pronounced



X

on the 8th of March, 1838, was to the effect that the Church had forfeited the benefice of Auchterarder for the time being, and that the Presbytery was bound to take Mr. Young "on trials" with a view to ordination. The first part of this judgment, involving, as it did, only the disposal of the benefice, the Church was prepared to acquiesce in and obey. The point at issue was not contained there, but in the control claimed by the Civil Court over the purely spiritual matter of ordination. The Church claimed that *in no case whatever* could she be coerced in the discharge of her spiritual duties. The Civil Courts asserted their right of coercion *in certain circumstances*, and they maintained that these circumstances had now occurred.

The grounds on which this judgment was rested—involving undisguised Erastianism—were of the most alarming nature. But the judgment itself was not one that could produce a direct collision. It declared, indeed, that the Presbytery was bound to take Mr. Young "on trials;" but it did not *order* them to do so, and thus did not interfere with their free action. A case, however, soon arose in which this farther step—the logical consequence of the other—was unhesitatingly taken.

The details are unimportant for our purpose. Suffice it to say that when the Presbytery of Dunkeld was about to ordain a licentiate to a vacant charge, the Court of Session granted an "interdict" against their proceeding with this purely spiritual act. What was the Presbytery to do? As is explained in the Autobiography,



the Church of Scotland claimed that, by the constitution of the country, ecclesiastical jurisdiction belonged exclusively to her Church Courts. But here was the Court of Session manifestly assuming this very species of jurisdiction. Had not the precise circumstances occurred which Lord Jeffrey contemplated when, speaking in the Auchterarder case, he alluded to the possibility of invasion by one supreme court of the province of another—"When they trespass on the province of other courts, the remedy is for these courts totally to *disregard* the usurpation, and to proceed with their own business as if no such intrusion had occurred." The Presbytery accordingly, in violation of the interdict, proceeded with the ordination, and for this conduct they were summoned to the bar of the Court of Session on the 14th of June, 1839. "I was present," wrote Mr. Guthrie, "with Dr. Cunningham and Dr. Candlish; and I heard the Lord President of the Court of Session say that, on the next occasion when the ministers of the Church of Scotland broke an interdict, they would be visited with all the penalties of the law—the penalty of the law being the Calton jail."

The point at issue had now become one perfectly defined. As Mr. Guthrie put it in later years, "There was no mistake about the matter. This controversy was neither new to us nor new to Scotland. For one long and weary century, from the days of Popish Mary down to the blessed Revolution, our stout fathers had fought the very same battle. The whole blood of the Covenant had been



shed on this field. We had nought else to do but to pluck the old weapons from the dead men's hands; and when the State came down on us in its pride and power, man once more the moss-grown ramparts where our fathers had bled and died. The rust was rubbed from the old swords; the selfsame arguments which James Guthrie used two hundred years ago at the bar, when on trial for his life, were pled over again; nor was there a bit of ground on all the field but was dyed with our fathers' blood, and indented with their footmarks."\*

The spirit of the Covenanters still lived in their sons, and once again the old banner was shaken out of its folds, on which the ancient motto was legible as ever—"For Christ's Crown and Covenant." The matter was one in regard to which there could be no compromise. The Church might have to forego the State's alliance and support, but she could never submit to the State's interference with her own special work. "I trust the right-hearted men," wrote Mr. Guthrie to Dr. Burns of Tweedsmuir, on 26th June, 1840, "will get grace to stand together; and, if we are not to live to see happier days, we can neither fight nor fall in so good a cause. The call for a solemn league is increasing every day. Steps are taking to that effect, and it is delightful to see men's resolution rising with the danger. If things do not take some unexpected turn by-and-by, we will shake the land. The Church of Christ cannot perish; and

\* "A Plea for the Ante-Disruption Ministers," by Thomas Guthrie, D.D., 1859, p. 18.



the men who have to dread the temporary abolition of the Establishment are our opponents."

Meanwhile, fresh complications arose. The Evangelical majority in the Church had a double conflict to maintain; they were not only defied by the law courts outside, but harassed by the "Moderate" party of the Church from within. This party comprised within its number many shades of opinion, from views approximating to those of the Evangelicals down to the most undisguised Erastianism. As a whole, however, they admitted the right of the Civil Courts to be the exclusive interpreters of the Church's constitution. Consequently, when the Court of Session pronounced the Veto Act "illegal," they held that the law itself was thereby at an end. Denying, by implication, the separate existence of the Church as a spiritual society, they refused to allow that any one of her laws could be ecclesiastically valid while civilly invalid. As a necessary consequence, we find them, all through the struggle, siding with the Civil Courts against the majority of the Church.

The first case in which the attitude thus assumed by the Moderates seriously embarrassed the situation was that of Marnoch, a parish in the Presbytery of Strathbogie, in Banffshire. As Mr. Guthrie's figure here appears on the scene, we must again enter into some brief detail.

The population of Marnoch numbered 3,000 souls;



but so entirely unacceptable was Lord Fife's presentee, that only a single man—the keeper of a public-house—could be induced to sign his call. In the Presbytery of Strathbogie, however, unlike that of Dunkeld, the Moderates were in the majority; and, although they at first obeyed the law of the Church, and declined to take Mr. Edwards “on trials,” yet, on his appealing to the Court of Session, and securing a judgment that the Presbytery was bound to take steps with a view to his ordination, the majority, seven in number, declared their intention to obey. They thus intimated, in the plainest terms, that, in regard to a purely spiritual matter, they chose rather to take their orders from the courts of law than from the courts of the Church.

This conduct of the majority of the Presbytery, amounting to a breach of their ordination vow, the Commission of Assembly, on the 11th of December, 1839—by a majority of 121 to 14—visited by a sentence of “*suspension* :” i.e., these seven ministers were temporarily prohibited from exercising any spiritual function. Meanwhile, the Commission of Assembly deputed some of the best and ablest ministers of the Church—the saintly Robert McCheyne among the number—to proceed to Strathbogie, and there to preach, and administer ordinances, to the congregations of those ministers who were now under ecclesiastical discipline, till such time as the sentence of suspension should be removed. Mr. Guthrie was one of these delegates.

To checkmate this action on the part of the Church



courts, the suspended ministers applied to the Court of Session for an order to cancel the sentence of suspension which their ecclesiastical superiors had pronounced on them. They asked, not merely that the Civil Court should continue them in the possession of the temporal emoluments of their office, but in the exercise of their office itself. Nay, more; they demanded that no other ministers of the Church of Scotland should be permitted to preach or dispense ordinances anywhere within their parishes. This application the Court granted, but to the extent, at first, only of interdicting the delegated ministers from using the churches or schools.

Mr. Guthrie went down to Strathbogie in February, 1840. He was in the district when matters proceeded to a previously unheard-of extremity. On a renewed application by the seven ministers, the Court of Session—by a majority—granted an “*extended interdict*,” forbidding Mr. Guthrie, or any other of the Church’s delegates, to preach or dispense ordinances in any building whatever within that district, nay, even on the high road or open moor. Here, beyond all question, was a clear issue. As Lord Fullerton put it, when opposing the demand which the other judges granted, “Disguise the matter as their lordships might, they could not come to a decision upon the Note of Suspension without taking into consideration matters which were purely ecclesiastical, and beyond the jurisdiction of a civil court. . . . Unless the whole distinction



between the civil and the ecclesiastical law was at once overthrown, their lordships could not pass a Note of Suspension of this kind." Nevertheless, their lordships did pass it; and Lord Cockburn, noting the circumstance in his *Journal* (I. 286), remarked, "Those who rail at the audacity of the Assembly had as well reflect on the comparative audacity of the Civil Court, by which, in effect, not seven ministers, but the whole Church was suspended."

This extraordinary decision was regarded with all but universal astonishment. Men asked, "Are the days of Charles II. come back on us?" Mr. Robertson of Ellon, one of the leading members of the Moderate party, expressed his emphatic disapproval of it; but while, in the words of his biographer,\* he considered it as "but the fragment of a great controversy," it appeared to Mr. Guthrie and his brethren of the Evangelical party only the logical issue of those Erastian principles which the Court of Session had enunciated in the Auchterarder case. "We saw the mischief at its commencement," said Dr. Chalmers; "we saw it in what may be termed its seminal principle, and, as it were, through its rudimental or embryo wrapping, from the first deliverance of the Civil Courts in the case of Auchterarder. The public did not comprehend, and, at the time, did not sympathize with us. The celebrated interdict against preaching has at length opened their eyes."

The interdict was served on Mr. Guthrie while at

\* Professor Charteris, "*Life of Dr. Robertson*," p. 160.



Keith. "In going to preach at Strathbogie," we use his own words in a recent speech, "I was met by an interdict from the Court of Session,—an interdict to which, as regards civil matters, I gave implicit obedience. On the Lord's Day, when I was preparing for divine service, in came a servant of the law, and handed me an interdict. I told him he had done his duty, and I would do mine. The interdict forbade me, under penalty of the Calton-hill jail, to preach the Gospel in the parish churches of Strathbogie. I said, the parish churches are stone and lime, and belong to the State; I will not intrude there. It forbade me to preach the Gospel in the school-houses. I said, the school-houses are stone and lime, and belong to the State; I will not intrude there. It forbade me to preach in the churchyard, and I said, the dust of the dead is the State's, and I will not intrude there. But when these Lords of Session forbade me to preach my Master's blessed Gospel, and offer salvation to sinners anywhere in that district under the arch of heaven, I put the interdict under my feet and I preached the Gospel."\*

"DRUMBLADE, 20th February, 1840.

"I heard of the interdict on Saturday. . . . When our chaise rolled away for Huntly, Keith was in a state of high

\* Mr. Guthrie was asked to preach in London in 1850. In expressing his inability to do so, he wrote to Mr. Fox Maule on the 9th of July, "The truth is I am not able for it. I am not so strong as people take me to be. My doctor has issued a positive interdict against my undertaking this work, and I am not free to do with that as I did with the Strathbogie one. They are both, indeed, directed against my preaching; but they rest on very different grounds, and I feel the *medical* Interdict rests on as good grounds as the *legal* one did on bad."



excitement. The news of the interdict had spread like wildfire. Every man, woman, and child were at their doors. The enemy said that we were fleeing; our friends that we were apprehended; and one of the suspended ministers who was in Keith when we went off, went home rejoicing, it was said, that we were whirled away to jail.

"I told you of the congregations I had in Keith. On Monday morning the interdict was served, which was no sooner done than, like Daniel of old, I proceeded, without loss of time, to break it, driving off to Botriphnie, where, according to previous notice, I preached, and preached to a barn full; and, at the close of the service, I opened fire upon the men who craved and the lords who granted the interdict. The women were in tears; the men looked most ferocious.

"After three hours of it, I set off at nine o'clock at night for Mortlach; and next day addressed and preached to a mighty multitude in a distillery loft used as a church. They calculated there were about one thousand people there. Service closed, I again opened on the interdict, displaying it before them. The expressions of indignation were both loud and deep. It was another thing from an Edinburgh display of feeling. They were almost all on their feet, and the light of the candles, hung by wires from the rafters, fell on the faces of weeping women and scowling, resolute, fiery-looking men. After I had finished, Major Stewart\* moved a series of strong, stringent resolutions, and a petition, which were unanimously adopted.

"I forgot to say that, on the forenoon of the same day, plaided and mounted on rough, shaggy, Highland nags, Bell † and I galloped away over the moors and mountains, like two

\* "At the close of the services, I remember," writes the Rev. Hugh A. Stewart, of the Free Church, Penicuik, son of Major Stewart, "Dr. Guthrie detailed some of the circumstances which had led to the suspension of the majority of the Presbytery of Strathbogie. He spoke with great fervour, and the feelings of the people were wrought to such a pitch that I believe he could have persuaded them to do almost anything, even to march up the valley, and pull down the old church and manse. Holding up the interdict he had received from the sheriff officer, his voice (somewhat peculiar to the Banffshire folks) thundered out the words, 'Sooner would I rot in the darkest dungeon of all broad Scotland, than I would have been Mr. Cruickshank to have gone to the Court of Session, and demanded such a document as that against a brother-minister!' So saying, he flung it on the table before them."

† The late Rev. T. B. Bell, afterwards of the Free Church, Leswalt.



interdicted men of the old Covenant time, to hold a conventicle at Glass; and there, at midday, we had a large barn filled to the throat. The fellows' legs were dangling over our heads; we had one congregation below, and another above, seated on the planks and rafters. The right blood of the people is up; and there, as everywhere else, the affair is working like barm.

"On Wednesday forenoon, in as bitter a wind as ever blew, to the great danger of my nose, I came over the hills to Cairnie, to hold another conventicle there; and, as at Glass, I found the place of meeting by marking the centre point where the different streams of worshippers met. It was a pretty sight to see the red tartan plaids emerging from the gorges of the hills; and in such a country which had long been cursed with Moderatism, it was a wonderful sight to see men and women, at high noonday, leaving their hill and household and farm-work, and thronging by hundreds to hear the Gospel.\*

\* Mr. Guthrie met with a cheering proof long afterwards that the word he preached at Strathbogie had not returned void. "I have just received," he wrote from London, "a letter from a worthy Independent minister in Morayshire, who sends with it one he has received from his brother in South America. The good man begins his letter to me by saying that he is sure I will rejoice with him over the good news of his brother's letter. He goes on to tell me that that brother, still dearly beloved, has been the grief of his life and the subject of years of earnest daily prayer. After becoming thoroughly depraved, he had at length left the country, no longer to remain at home to disgrace his friends, but still to be followed by their prayers. Now, he adds, we are rejoicing over him, and in the letter of his which I send, you will find abundant reason to sow the good seed of the Word beside all waters, in season and out of season.

"On turning to the letter which, 'like a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul,' had brought him 'good news from a far country,' I found his once-prodigal brother relating to him, with overflowing joy and praise to God, how he had been plucked as a brand from the burning, and how—and of this he wished his brother to inform me for my encouragement—it was a sentence of one of the sermons I preached, many years before, in Strathbogie, which had been blessed to be the means of his conversion. The seed had dropped into his dormant soul, he had carried it through as it were the very fires of hell, and (more wonderful than the grains of corn which Macgregor found in a mummy-case, where they had lain dormant for 3,000 years, and which yet grew and bore fruit when sown in the gardens of the Temple here in London, as I saw with my own eyes) the seed of the saving Word had retained its vitality, and, when none was looking for it, and all hope seemed gone, sprung up to eternal life."



After sermon, I made an address, and they resolved to petition—to cry aloud against this act of new and most unrighteous oppression. Some of the men were clear for rising in the old Covenanting way!

“What madmen these ministers were to crave and serve this interdict! It is the best pocket-pistol I ever carried. I hope they will complain. I have no avidity for a prison (and it were wrong to court the personal glory of such suffering), but no man can tell the good such violence on their part would do our cause. The only thing I would be afraid of would be a violent explosion of public feeling. Major Stewart, a justice of the peace, an influential man in this quarter, and a strong friend of ours, has written to Lord John Russell, telling him that, as an old field-officer who had often charged on a battlefield at the head of the grenadiers, he has no fear for himself; but warning the Government that, unless they restrain these courts, and take immediate steps to protect the liberties and ministers of the Church, he anticipates here nothing but some fierce explosion.”\* (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

Mr. Guthrie returned from Strathbogie in the end of February, 1840, and on the 20th March we find him thus explaining the situation:—“The Church cannot stand where she is. The courts of law have declared the Veto Act illegal. We think that they are wrong—that they have gone beyond their jurisdiction—that they have left their own province and trenched upon ours; and that we might justly address those judges in the words of the priests to Uzziah the king, ‘Get ye out of the temple.’ But while, on the one

\* Towards the close of the year, the presentee to Marnoch raised an action in the Court of Session, asking that the majority of the Presbytery of Strathbogie should be ordered to ORDAIN HIM TO THE HOLY OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY. This, as the logical issue of their previous judgment ordering the Presbytery to take him on trials, the Court of Session granted. The majority of the Presbytery, though suspended from all exercise of their office by the Supreme Court of the Church, nevertheless went through the form of ordination amid circumstances so painful and humiliating that their memory will long remain in Scotland.



hand, we are satisfied that the courts of law have committed a violent aggression on the province of the Church; and are, on the other hand, determined to maintain our present position till a better settlement can be obtained; still it is plain that neither the Established Church nor any other Church can remain in permanent collision with the Civil Courts of the country. In the end, the struggle, if it is protracted, may be destructive, not to one only, but to both.”\*

Negotiations were, accordingly, entered into, first with the Whig government under Lord Melbourne, and, after 1841, with the Tory government under Sir Robert Peel. In a letter, dated 26th February, 1841, referring to one of these, Mr. Guthrie writes:—“Cunningham has not yet returned (from London), but Candlish was telling us the other day that he had had a letter from him which was as gloomy as could be. He had written home—for cold comfort to his wife—that he had found the Conservatives so ferocious and dead-set against the Church, that he did not consider his stipend worth two years’ purchase. Chalmers, as I mentioned before, has given up all hopes of enlightening their eyes. Both are, I take it, too gloomy; though it is not easy to say how things may turn up. Both, of course, remain unshaken by their fears. . . . Chalmers has a kind of desperate joy in the prospect of an

\* Lecture on “The Present Duty and Prospects of the Church of Scotland,” by the Rev. Thomas Guthrie—No. VIII. of “Edinburgh Lectures on Non-Intrusion.” John Johnstone. 1840.



overthrow, in the idea that some four or five hundred churches would be built for us outed ministers; and that we would hardly have them built when, to preserve themselves from ruin, our opponents would give way, and be glad to take us back again; and that, in this way, both his objects would be accomplished, of Church extension, and Church independence and reform!"

Mr. Guthrie had, personally, no share in any of these dealings with statesmen; and it may be well at this point to indicate the precise place he filled, and the special work he performed during these eventful years.

No feature of the period is more remarkable than that group of ministers, seven or eight in number, who were raised up to take the conspicuous part in the Disruption conflict: but, as King David had among his captains "three mighties," so, among the prominent ministers on the Evangelical side, this distinction was awarded by common consent to the three, whose names, by a curious coincidence, began with the same initial letter,—Chalmers, Cunningham, and Candlish. All three were pre-eminently Church leaders; Mr. Guthrie was not.

He took comparatively little share in the deliberations and debates of Church courts. "I remember his once remarking to me" (writes Dr. Elder, now of Rothesay, at that time a co-Presbyter of his), "when I was sitting beside him during one of the fights, 'My folks in the



north country sometimes ask me why I don't make speeches in the Presbytery of Edinburgh, as I used to do in the Arbroath Presbytery; and I tell them that in the Edinburgh Presbytery we speak by *counsel*; for when Cunningham and Candlish speak on a subject there's no need for any other man to say a word.'” Or, as he himself put it in later years, “I have never taken any active part in the management of our Church; I never belonged to what might be called the council of its leaders, but all along, like ‘Harry of the Wynd,’ I fought for my own hand. No man can be more thankful than I am that God has, in His kind providence, furnished our Church with so many men who have not only the talent but the taste for Church courts. I am content to remain in the cabin, and allow other folk to walk the quarter-deck.” He contributed almost nothing to the abundant polemical literature of the time, writing only one short tract.\*

Nevertheless, the place he did fill was one which no man could have occupied but himself. To quote the testimony of Dr. Candlish†:—“Guthrie was a power, unique in himself, and rising in his uniqueness above other powers. He did not, indeed, venture much on the uncongenial domain, to him, of ecclesiastical polemics, or the wear and tear of ordinary Church administration; leaving that to others whose superiority in their department he

\* No. 6 of a Series of Tracts on “The Intrusion of Ministers on Reclaiming Congregations.”

† In the sermon preached after Dr. Guthrie's funeral.



was always the first to acknowledge. But in his own sphere, and in his own way, he was, to us and to the principles on which we acted, a tower of strength. His eloquence alone—so expressive of himself, so thoroughly inspired by his personal idiosyncrasy, so full always of genial humour, so apt to flash into darts of wit, and yet withal so profoundly emotional and ready for passionate and affectionate appeals—that gift or endowment alone made him an invaluable boon to our Church in the times of her ten years' conflict and afterwards." His place in the vessel, from whose mast-head the old blue flag of the Covenant again floated, was defined in his own characteristic words, "Before the Disruption I oftener found myself at the guns than at the wheel."

As indicated towards the close of the Autobiography, Dr. Elder was associated with him on one occasion in the work of rousing the country.

"We were sent out together" (we quote again from Dr. Elder's MS.) "on the first Non-Intrusion raid in 1889, after the final decision in the first Auchterarder case. Our object at that time was to make the people understand the real position of the Church under the decision of the Civil Courts, so as if possible to influence the Legislature, with a view to obtain some legal enactment which would conserve the principle of non-intrusion and protect the spiritual independence of the Church.

"He has told in his Autobiography of a triumphant meeting we had at Moffat; I may say something about another at Dumfries, of which I have no doubt he would have gone on to tell. The meeting there, like the Moffat one, was crowded; and the minister of the congregation occupied the chair, opening the proceedings with prayer. By this time Dr. Begg had joined us; and it was arranged that I should speak first, Dr. Begg second, and Dr. Guthrie last. But it



immediately appeared that a body of Chartists had come to the meeting under the leadership of a Dumfries writer, with the obvious intention of stopping our whole proceedings by uproar. After many ineffectual attempts to restore order, Dr. Guthrie at last proposed to them that, if they would hear us out, they might speak after us, and reply to our statements; which was agreed to.

"So I began in the midst of great noise and confusion; Dr. Guthrie charging me to speak on whether they listened or not, assuring me that after a while they would grow wearied and the noise would cease. This turned out true; for, after a time, they did listen pretty well—occasionally throwing out coarse remarks. There was more interruption during Dr. Begg's speech, some of his hits being very pungent and telling; but the uproar sometimes rose to a great height while Dr. Guthrie spoke; the friendly part of the audience being meanwhile quite carried away with his eloquence.

"Immediately on his sitting down, the Chartist leader rose in the midst of noise and confusion; and, claiming his right now to speak, proceeded to address the meeting in a very offensive way, bordering on profanity. Dr. Guthrie whispered to us, 'We are in a scrape with this fellow, and we must watch our opportunity to get out of it.' So, after a few minutes, the man came out with a sort of profane and obscene allusion to Scripture, when Dr. Guthrie, starting from his seat, and raising himself to his full height, lifted his long arm above his head, and exclaimed in a voice of thunder, 'Shocking! shocking! I call on all Christian men and women to leave this meeting'; and, suiting the action to the word, he strode out of the church, followed by the chairman and almost the whole audience!

"The Chartists, being left alone, proceeded to choose a chairman in the person of a letter-carrier not of high repute, when an old woman of the right stamp, who had lingered behind the rest, rushed to the precentor's desk, where he was taking his seat, and dragged him by force from his elevation. The uproar then became so great, that the managers of the church ordered the gas to be extinguished, and so the scene suddenly ended in darkness."

It is impossible to convey any just conception of the excitement which in these days pervaded every county of Scotland. "Scotland is in a flame about the Church



question," wrote Lord Palmerston to his brother, Sir W. Temple, in the Disruption year. But the words may be equally applied to the preceding period, of which we write; and, no doubt, in the excitement, when men's feelings were at a white heat, many things were said and done on both sides which are to be regretted, and ought now to be forgotten. Probably no other country could have presented such a spectacle. To the ears of an English visitor the keen air of the North seemed filled with strange and uncouth words—*Auchterarder*, *Strathbogie*, *Culsaumond*, *Anti-patronage*, *Non-intrusion*, *Liberum Arbitrium*. Families were divided, nay, the very boys at school ranged themselves into hostile camps of Moderates and Non-Intrusionists. The polemical literature of the time was almost incredible in quantity. Think of seven hundred and eighty-two distinct pamphlets on this one subject, printed during these years, circulated by thousands, and falling like snow-flakes all over the land. The newspapers teemed with advertisements and reports of "Non-intrusion Meetings," "Church Defence Meetings," "Spiritual Independence Meetings," in towns, in villages, in hamlets even; nor was it the idle, excitable mob who were stirred by this question, but the quiet, steady, God-fearing men and women of the land. To them the principles of Spiritual Independence and Non-intrusion were matters that had a direct bearing on their own and their children's highest interests; and it is very significant to note how numerous were the intimations in the



newspapers of the time calling meetings for special prayer.

When Voltaire visited Great Britain in 1727, he exclaimed, "What an extraordinary country! Here I find fifty religions, and but one sauce!" No one will pretend that it is to our country's credit to present so many denominational divisions; but it is the glory of any land to possess a people who can think for themselves on a religious question, who are willing to struggle and to sacrifice for conscience' sake and their Church's liberties. Scotland may claim a special distinction in this respect. It is no Scotchman whom Tennyson has described in the "Northern Farmer;" for hear how the old man speaks of his pastor:—

"An' I hallus comed to's choorch afore moy Sally wur deä, d,  
An' 'eerd un a bummin' awaäy loike a buzzard-clock ower my yeäd,  
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meänd, but I thowt a 'ad summut to säy,  
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said, an' I comed awaäy."

An easy-going parishioner like this would be utterly indifferent to his rights in the election of a minister, and still more to the inherent rights of his Church. The grossest form of patronage, the most abject Erastianism, would be no grievance to him; and had the members of the Scottish Church been of such a type, they could never have been roused to an intelligent interest in the questions which resulted in the Disruption.

As the conflict thickened, the interest extended far



beyond Scotland. Other Churches, both in England and Ireland, watched the struggle with the keenest interest. The Irish Presbyterian Church especially, herself a daughter of the Church of Scotland, and holding her standards, had espoused the cause of the Evangelical party from the very first, and continued all through the conflict to give that party the most generous sympathy and support. She invited a deputation to cross the Channel; and, along with the Rev. Charles J. Brown and Mr. Bridges, Writer to the Signet, Mr. Guthrie was appointed. He announces the proposed expedition in a letter to his mother:—"17th February, 1841. I am by-and-by to set off for Ireland. There came a demand for a deputation from our Church to visit their principal towns, and I was singled out in the request as one whose style of speaking was peculiarly suited for an Irish auditory! This afforded us all no small amusement; but it became serious work when the Committee insisted that I should go. Though, if I had not the *brogue* I might have the *blarney* for the 'boys,' it was to be a most inconvenient thing for me, having so many schemes yet to set a-going, and some of them in the very act of uprearing, connected with my new church. I fought the whole Committee for a good half-hour on the subject, till Dunlop and Candlish got angry, and they all declared that it would be flying in the face of duty to refuse; and so, at last, I was fairly forced off my feet, and gave a very slow consent. . . . We all felt that the Irish people must be kept and roused."



"COLERAINE, 12th March, 1841.

"The Belfast affair went off in a very large and magnificent church, in a house crowded to the door and ceiling, and in the grandest and most enthusiastic style you ever saw. I never, I think, spoke under the inspiration of such enthusiasm; they saluted me, when I rose, with what they call 'Kentish fire,' and repeatedly discharged volleys of it during my address. . . . Our progress has been more like a triumph than anything else. We cannot but be delighted and deeply affected with the cordiality and sympathy both of ministers and people. I never saw anything like it, and will remember Ireland as long as I live, nor ever allow a man, or woman either, to say a word against our friends here. They have Scotch faces, Scotch names, Scotch affections, and far more than Scotch kindness.

"At Londonderry I had the pleasure of sitting on the cannon they call 'Roaring Meg,' who spoke much to the purpose in the memorable siege. Above their court-house there, I saw a figure of Justice which reminded me of our Court of Session: *the wind had blown away the scales, and left only the sword.*

"Things look well for next Assembly. What with Gray and Candlish, and Cunningham and Chalmers, there will be a superabundance of talent on our side. I hope the Moderates will send up their choicest warriors to call it forth." (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

"ARMAGH, March, 1841.

"On our way from Omagh to Cookstown we passed over a high and very wild country, crossing bogs not less than twenty miles long. We were overtaken by a tremendous shower, and, being in an open car, were glad to take shelter in a sort of half-way house. They were regular cut-throat-looking characters that kept it, and in such a lone place I would not have cared for spending a night. They spoke Erse to each other. One of the men was ill with inflammation in the chest. He had picked up from Bridges that I knew something of medicine, and made application to me for the benefit of my skill. I saw his tongue, and felt his pulse, and ordered him to bed, and played the doctor to a T!

"This town of Armagh is an old antique-looking place, and is the seat of the primates of the Episcopalian and Popish churches. We went to see the Cathedral—you know how well pleased I am with my own—partly induced by the strong desire of Brown and Bridges to hear the chanting. I accompanied them, and we heard the chanting, to be sure,



by a parcel of young scamps in white surplices, who behaved themselves most irreverently; but we heard more than the chanting, for to our dismay (being in a hurry to be off) the chanting was closed by a High Church sermon, which, fortunately for us, was very short. We saw Beresford, the primate: he is a lordly-looking fellow.

"But I must reserve a great deal (if we are spared) for the leisure of the Manse of Tweedsmuir. When I left Edinburgh the bairns had the months, the weeks, the days counted—I am not sure but they were trying the hours—till the beginning of the holidays.\*

"All well—sometimes very tired; little sleep and great excitement. Fell asleep last night upon the platform."

"EDINBURGH, 5th April, 1841.

"It is satisfactory to hear from many letters and papers I have received that our Irish expedition has done much good. Since my return I have lain in bed a whole week almost, during which I have read more newspapers than I have done at other times. A queer mixture they were; some of them extravagantly laudatory, and others as extravagantly abusive. It is, to a man accustomed to both, not a little amusing to turn in a moment from the bepraising to the bespattering. And what lies they do tell! If it were not for the sin of it, it were perfectly entertaining." (*To Mrs. Burns, Tweedsmuir.*)

Of this Irish tour, Dr. C. J. Brown supplies us with a characteristic reminiscence:—

"At the Belfast meeting it had been arranged that I was to speak first, Mr. Bridges next, and that Dr. Guthrie should wind up with a full and earnest appeal to our brethren for aid

\* Mrs. Guthrie's uncle, the Rev. George Burns, D.D., now of the Free Church, Corstorphine, was at that time minister of Tweedsmuir. He has many recollections of the visit to which this letter alludes. When Mr. Guthrie preached, the people came from great distances—some from twelve and fourteen miles—to hear him. His chief outdoor amusements were *stirling* across the Tweed and fishing in it. At the latter sport his success was small. He had not then acquired the skill which his subsequent experience at Lochlee gave him; and, in Dr. Burns's words, "the country people jocularly assigned another cause, namely, that his tall figure cast such a shadow as scared away the finny tribes!"



in the shape of petitions to Parliament. The second speech—that of Mr. Bridges—was full of spirit, and interspersed with strokes of humour. After he had spoken at some length, he told, with great effect, a story of the earlier days of Sir George Sinclair. The audience was convulsed with laughter; and Dr. Guthrie, who sat close behind him, sagaciously perceiving that the time had come for the speech to end with advantage, ventured, quietly but very decidedly, to give the speaker's coat-tails a pull, whispering to him as he did so, '*Down, man!*' The hint was taken, and the speech closed with such marked effect that Mr. Bridges, thanking Dr. Guthrie warmly, declared his full purpose to follow his counsels during the rest of the tour.

"When we arrived at Dublin (where the concluding meeting was held) we were waited on by a deputation of the ministers, to assure us that the people of that city were of a class to be moved only by calm, grave, and thoroughly logical statements of our case. As I had dealt in no pleasantries, I had nothing to change. Mr. Bridges, on the contrary, considered it expedient to make his speech as grave and lawyer-like as possible; and so, omitting all his anecdotes ('Sir George' among the rest), he was tamer and less effective than usual. Dr. Guthrie perceived this; and, having wisely come to the conclusion that the Dublin Presbyterians were very much like their neighbours, threw himself at once on them with his usual fullness of illustration and humorous incident, and made quite as telling and powerful a speech as on former occasions. It was amusing to us when our friend, alive to the contrast with his own somewhat marred speech, said to Dr. Guthrie at the close, '*Really it was too bad; you gave all your jokes, and I had not one of mine!*'"

"I need hardly add that Dr. Guthrie was the life of all our somewhat fatiguing journeyings and labours by his unvarying cheerfulness, his fine eye for the beauties of the country, and his ever-recurring sallies of humour and mirth."

The object of the Irish visit, as Dr. Brown has stated, had been to secure the assistance of the Presbyterians of Ireland in the attempt the Church of Scotland was making to obtain legislative protection against the encroachments of the Civil Courts. In the course of the



month after Mr. Guthrie's return to Edinburgh, the Duke of Argyll introduced a Bill into the House of Lords for the settlement of the question. That measure, which was ultimately withdrawn, did not propose to decide whether the Civil Courts or the Church were right in their respective contentions; but, by legalising the Church's Veto Law, it aimed at removing the cause of difference between them.

The Evangelical party were unanimous in their approval of the Duke of Argyll's Bill. A large and growing section, however, would have preferred a more radical remedy, viz., the total abolition of patronage. Among these, it need scarcely be said, Mr. Guthrie was numbered. As in Arbirlot days, many were the Anti-Patronage meetings at which he thundered against an abuse which he pronounced "contrary to Scripture and contrary to reason." Take, as a specimen of his speeches on these occasions, some sentences from one delivered in Edinburgh, on 31st January, 1842:—

"Though I am no musician, my Lord, yet if I could form any idea of what music is, the motion which I have to propose ends with words, to my ears, extremely musical—the abolition of patronage. Short of that consummation, I see no resting-place for the Church of Scotland; and, short of that, I frankly tell you, I wish none. I don't say but that I would rejoice in a breathing-time; I would welcome even a pause in the storm: but let men talk of difficulties, dangers, distresses as they may; for myself, I rejoice in the very tempest that is compelling our Church to change her course.

"I remember reading in history that King William left Holland with the intention of landing on a particular part of the coast of England; and had he landed there, he had landed



in the lions' den. But as his fleet neared the English shore, Heaven seemed to fight against the enterprise; the wind shifted round upon the compass, and blew from the very quarter where he sought a landing. The gale rose into a hurricane; and contrary to the King's wish, contrary to his plans, and in the face of all his seamen, his fleet, with the flag of freedom at its masthead, was drifted by the tempest onwards to a point of which he had never thought, but which was for him the best place of all. May such be the issue with the Church of Scotland! I weary for the next General Assembly; we will weather the gale till then, and then we shall hear its venerable Moderator give the word 'bout ship;' and then we shall see the noble vessel, leaving 'Calls' and 'Vetos' and half-measures all astern, amid the cheers of the crew, bear down on Anti-patronage.

"I know that there has been a difference of opinion about the essential evil of patronage among Non-intrusionists. I know more—I know that our opponents have been flattering themselves with the hope that this difference of opinion would lead to difference of action. But, my Lord, there was an event that happened in the history of our country, from which we have learned a lesson never, I trust, to be forgotten. I allude to the battle of Bothwell Brig. When the troops of Monmouth were sweeping the bridge, and Claverhouse, with his dragoons, was swimming the Clyde, the Covenanters, instead of closing their ranks against their common foe, were wrangling about points of doctrine and differences of opinion. In consequence, they were scattered by enemies whom, if united, they might have withstood and conquered.

"But though the battle of Bothwell Brig was lost, the lesson of Bothwell Brig is not. We will sacrifice no principle; but it is common sense which tells us that, rather than break our ranks and rush forward to what we believe to be a right position, leaving many of our friends behind, we should advance in one solid column, and with united ranks. Now this, my Lord, is just what we have done. We have raised two colours, and shall soon, I hope, raise a third, united as before. We have one on which is blazoned the words, 'No Surrender.' We have another, on which is blazoned the words, 'No Division.' And I trust that next Assembly will shake a third from its folds, on which shall be blazoned forth the words, 'No Patronage.'"

Let it be clearly understood, however, that Mr. Guthrie



did not regard the abolition of patronage as *the main question* about which the Ten Years' Conflict was fought. He felt that a higher issue was involved. "It happened in our controversy," he said in recent years, "much as I heard an old soldier say it happened at Waterloo, on whose bloody field, facing the iron hail of France, he had stood with his gallant comrades, 'from morn till dewy eve.' Placed on the left of our position, where plumes and tartans waved, he said, speaking of the right wing, 'The battle, sir, began at Hougomont, but the firing came steadily on.' Even so here; the battle began with the rights of the people, but it 'came steadily on;' till, extending itself, it embraced, within the din and dust of the fight, that grand, central, and most sacred of all positions—the right of Jesus Christ as king to reign within His own Church." The distinction is clearly brought out by Cockburn in his Life of Lord Jeffrey. "The contest at first," he says, "was merely about patronage, but this point was soon . . . absorbed in the far more vital question whether the Church had any spiritual jurisdiction independent of the control of the civil power. This became the question on which the longer coherence of the elements of the Church depended. The judicial determination was, in effect, that no such jurisdiction existed. This was not the adjudication of any abstract political or ecclesiastical nicety; it was the declaration, and, as those who protested against it held, the introduction of a principle which affected



the whole practical being and management of the Establishment."

To DAVID KEY.\*

"EDINBURGH, 12th May, 1842.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have often intended to write you in answer to a kind letter I received from you some good long while ago. But if you knew how many letters I am obliged to write every day on matters that will not put off, I am sure that you would excuse me. I calculate that I get some two or three thousand letters of one kind or another in the year. . . .

"I will be very happy again to have a *crack* with you about many things, and especially the affairs of our Church. These occupy much of my thoughts, care, and time. We have two stated meetings about them each week,† besides occasional meetings. All are looking forward, both friends and foes, with much interest to the Assembly; and all who feel a right interest in the welfare of our Zion should be earnestly engaged in prayer at this most critical season. The popular election of Elders is safe. We will carry a motion for the abolition of patronage. We are to propose an overture anent grievances, which will also be carried. We are to make a number of decided thrusts at the vitals of Moderation, and I hope the Head of our Church will guide and strengthen us. Our enemies in high quarters are shaking, and when their ranks are wavering, now, under God, is our time to strike home and make our highest demands. If our men stand firm and resolute, ready to suffer all things rather than yield an inch of principle, our enemies will give way. The words of the

\* The Abirlot weaver, one of Mr. Guthrie's elders in his country charge, whose reminiscences are given at p. 328, vol. i.

† On these occasions, a friend tells us, Mr. Guthrie was wonderfully animated. The tone of the meeting was one day somewhat gloomy. The near prospect of having to go forth on the world penniless was a serious one, even though all felt the cause worthy of the sacrifice. "Well," said Mr. Guthrie, in his hearty way, "Cunningham there [who had a rich library] can sell his books; they will keep him for a good while. But, as for me, I have no books to sell; and I see nothing for it but to publish a volume of stories!" The idea thus thrown out as a joke was realised in a curious way long years thereafter, when, in 1863, Messrs. Houlston and Wright, of London, without Dr. Guthrie's knowledge, published a shilling book, entitled "*Anecdotes and Stories of the Rev. Dr. Guthrie*;" now in its twentieth thousand.



Apostle are emphatically applicable to the Church in the present juncture of affairs,—‘Having done all, stand!’

“Amid the bustle and driving and whirling of this place I often think of you all; and at this season of the year, when the country is so fascinating, I am especially led to think of Arbriot, and how beautiful and sweet the grounds and garden of my former manse must be. At the term, I am to shift my habitation; and as the house I am going to has a garden, I hope to have some enjoyment in my old relaxation of cultivating flowers. But I must close; I have not time for a line more. With kindest regards to your wife and all my old friends; and my prayers for your best welfare,

“Yours, my dear David, with unfeigned regard,

“Most sincerely,

“THOMAS GUTHRIE.”

The motion for the abolition of patronage, to which Mr. Guthrie alludes in this letter, was carried triumphantly in the Assembly of 1842.

Following on this resolution, the next step, in ordinary circumstances, would have been for the Church to have gone to the Legislature, and sought the repeal of the Act of Queen Anne. But more vital work was on hand. It had become evident that all attempts at compromise, such as that contained in the Duke of Argyll’s Bill, were destined, if not to failure, at least to create indefinite delay. Meanwhile, the Civil Courts, as case after case came before them, were encroaching on one after another of the most sacred prerogatives of the Church. The Church must, therefore, know, and that at once, whether the acts of the Civil Courts were to be homologated by the State.

“EDINBURGH, 17th May, 1842.

“... You would be gratified to see in our synod’s proceedings that we had struck such a good key-note for the



Assembly. There was not a man broke down of whose rottenness we were not previously aware. There seems to be no ground to doubt that we will have a very firm Assembly.

"You would see from Grant's speech some indications, at its close, that the Government had not backed, nor were very likely to back, the Moderates as they expected. I have no doubt that both Peel and Graham are most anxious to settle our question. It meets them in their members, and meets the members in their electors, very inconveniently. So, if we present a bold and resolute front, we have a chance of something like a measure of justice—of more than a measure, at least, under which we could barely remain in the Establishment." (*To his brother, Provost Guthrie.*)

The resolute attitude desiderated in this letter was promptly taken by the General Assembly of 1842. A "Claim of Rights," as it was commonly called, drawn up by Mr. Dunlop,\* was adopted by the Assembly, and forwarded to the Crown. After setting forth the grievances of the Church, it declared that "they cannot—in accordance with the Word of God, the authorised and ratified standards of this Church, and the dictates of their consciences—intrude ministers on reclaiming congregations, or carry on the government of Christ's Church subject to the coercion attempted by the Court of Session, and that at the risk and hazard of suffering the loss of the secular benefits conferred by the State, and the public advantages of an Establishment, they must, as by God's grace they will, refuse so to do; for, highly as they estimate these, they cannot put them in competition with the inalienable liberties of a Church of Christ, which, alike by their duty and allegiance to their

\* See vol. i., p. 176.



Head and King, and by their ordination vows, they are bound to maintain 'notwithstanding of whatsoever trouble or persecution may arise.'"\*

The end was now drawing near. On 9th August, 1842, the House of Lords pronounced judgment in what is termed the Second Auchterarder Case. By their decision, the vitally important principle was conclusively settled that, *in certain circumstances, the Courts of the Church were liable to be coerced by the penalties of law in the performance of their spiritual duties.* Immediate and united action was felt by the Evangelical party to be more than ever necessary; but it had first to be ascertained how far they were at one as to the course to be adopted. That there was no little difference of opinion

\* The only speech which Mr. Guthrie delivered in any General Assembly before 1843, was spoken in this Assembly of 1842.

The subject was one fitted to interest his catholic mind. During the last ten years of the eighteenth century, the Moderate party were in the height of their power. In the General Assembly of 1796, for example, missionary societies were condemned; Dr. Hill, the leader of the Moderate party, calling them "highly dangerous in their tendency to the good order of society at large"! It was not wonderful, therefore, that when Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, Rowland Hill, and James Haldane "went everywhere" through Scotland "preaching the Word," the General Assembly resolved that none of these "vagrant teachers," as they were contemptuously called, should be heard in the pulpits of the Established Church. In 1799 an Act was passed to this effect, and thus the Church of Scotland practically cut itself off from all the other churches of Christendom.

In 1842, this Act was repealed by the Evangelical majority, on which occasion we find Mr. Guthrie saying, "I look upon this Act 1799 as one of the blackest Acts the Church of Scotland ever passed, and I rejoice with all my heart that this motion has been made. I hold it was passed, not to exclude heresy from our pulpits, but to exclude truth." The fact is not without significance, that on the Disruption taking place, the old law was at once re-enacted by those who remained in the Establishment. (See "Lives of the Haldanes," 1871, p. 236.)



as to this among the party at that date is evident from the following letter which Mr. Guthrie wrote to the Rev. Jas. McCosh, then a minister in Brechin :—

“21st October, 1842.

“We had a long meeting to-day, and saw more daylight on the subject than I had yet seen. There is no difference among us here as to principles—as to our resolute determination, at all hazards and risks, to maintain our ground, set at nought and treat as waste paper the hostile invasions and decisions of the Civil Courts. But there has been, and is, considerable difference of opinion what, besides that, it is the duty of the Church to do, since the late Auchterarder decision.

“Some of us entertain very decided opinions about the unlawfulness of the Church continuing in connection with a State which insists on Erastian conditions, and draws the sword of persecution against the reclaiming Church. Our idea of the Church's duty is this :—that on many accounts she should not rashly proceed to dissolve the connection, but should go to the government of the land, explain how the terms on which she was united to the State have been altered to all practical purposes by the late decisions, how the compact has been therein violated, and how she cannot continue to administer the affairs of the Establishment unless she is to be freed from invasion and protected against persecution ; that therefore, unless the Government and Legislature shall, within a given and specified time, redress the wrongs we complain of, we shall dissolve the union, and leave all the sins and consequences at the door of an Erastian and oppressive State. There is some hope that in this way, were such a determination signed and sealed by some hundreds of ministers, the Government would be compelled to interfere and grant redress, rather than run all the risks to the civil and religious institutions of the country which a refusal might bring with it.

“There are others, such as Brown, Elder, and Begg, who are not prepared to take this step ; their idea is to remain in the Establishment till driven out, doing all the duties that belong to them. Well, our manifest duty, under the idea of remaining, is to purify the Church of Erastianism, and preserve it from it. So they agree that at this convocation the ministers should resolve to admit no Erastian into the Church, to license no Erastian student, to translate no Erastian, and to thrust out of the Church without any mercy every man and mother's son that



avails himself of these Erastian decisions, acknowledges them as binding the Church, or would in any way apply them in the face of our own laws.

"We, who would dissolve after due warning, can have no conscientious objection to continue for a time doing this work of excision. At the Convocation we may agree on that ground; but we still think our plan the best of the two. It may secure a free and pure Establishment; the latter plan must inevitably and certainly, though slowly, lead to the casting out of our party; it can in no case gain the object we may gain—a pure Establishment. We must cast out of the Church by the second proposal all that preach for, or in any way by overt acts countenance, the deposed of Strathbogie.\* We must cast out of the Church the Moderate majority of the late Synod of Aberdeen, and in less than two years we have all the Moderates declared to be no longer ministers of the Church of Scotland. They constitute themselves into *law* presbyteries, depose our clergy within their bounds, declare their parishes vacant, ordain ministers of their own on the presentation of patrons, and then claim the stipends, and they are given them; and so without the glance of a bayonet or ring of a musket—the appearance even of a law functionary—we are most quietly dispossessed and put down. This plan—and if we are to remain in the Church for any time we are bound to take it—this, you see, cuts us down in detail, disposes of us most quietly and peaceably for our opponents; and then we produce no effect on the land, on the Government, on Christendom, or on an ungodly world, by bearing the noblest testimony ever borne for the truth. I believe the bold course would save the Church—under God, I mean; and if it did not, men could not say we died struggling for a stipend. If it did not, the history of it would fill the brightest page in Church history. It would do more to recommend religion as a vital, eternal principle than all the sermons we will ever preach.

"I pray you turn over the subject in your mind, and talk of it with your friends, and let us pray that the Lord would bring us all to one opinion."

This letter alludes to a "Convocation" then in view. The bearing of that remarkable gathering on the

\* The seven ministers, having continued to defy the authority of the Church Courts, had been deposed by the General Assembly of 1841. Immediately after the Disruption they were reinstated in their charges, and two of them still (1876) survive as ministers of the Established Church.



Disruption, and all that has followed it, cannot be overestimated. We have repeatedly heard Dr. Guthrie, in conversation with Evangelical clergymen of the Church of England, express his conviction that, without it, the combined action taken at the Disruption had not been possible, and his regret that in their case such a conference for mutual counsel as to the path of duty did not seem to be considered possible.

But, until the Convocation met, Mr. Guthrie was not without considerable anxiety as to the result. Writing to his brother, Provost Guthrie, he first indicated the points on which there was general unanimity, and then proceeds—

“Supposing we have come to one mind on these branches of the subject, then comes the rub. In the event of the State refusing within reasonable time to redress our wrongs, and apply the remedy we judge to be indispensable, what is the duty of the Church in these circumstances? Unless God is remarkably gracious to us, and shall make our assembly something like another Pentecost, I look for nothing but a fatal division.

“Some of our brethren say the State has no right to change the terms of the union, that they are entitled to their stipends on the old terms, and can never, however the State may alter its mind, be compelled to give them up. There, I think, they are utterly wrong. We hold the Church to be supreme and sovereign in spirituals, the State to be so in temporals. It may be sinful, yet it is competent for the Church to change in spirituals: if we got what we fancied to be more light on any point of doctrine, the Church is free to change the Confession of Faith to-morrow, and, of course, in doing so, she would run the risk of losing her connection with the State and all its advantages. And what is free to the Church is free to the State: it can change its terms to-morrow, of course running the risk of losing its connection with the Church and all its advantages; and when, on a representation from the Church, the State refuses to interpose between its servants and us, it homolo-



gates their acts and principles, and, of course, at present the principle of the Auchterarder decision, which all our party hold to be pure Erastianism.

"Some of our country brethren say that we would not be justified in giving up endowments, consecrated by our pious forefathers to the support of the truth. That is sheer nonsense. They were left by our blinded fathers to the support of error, to pray their souls out of Purgatory.

"They say we cannot be justified in leaving our people. They never find any difficulty, most of them, in doing that, if translation offers a better stipend, or what is commonly called 'a larger sphere of usefulness.' Besides, they are not called on to leave their *people*, but only their *pay*; since they can have a cottage at £3 a year, and betaking themselves, if there is no other way of it, to tent-making, they may remain with their people to their dying day: at any rate, if they are persecuted in one city, they have liberty from Christ to flee to another.

"I admit their temptations to be very great. It is a serious and painful, a very serious and painful, prospect for men with wives and families to leave their certain emoluments and comfortable homes and go they know not where; but it is a very easy thing for men in these circumstances to delude and deceive themselves: and that, I am afraid they are doing, and are about more publicly to do.

"Whatever resolution such men may come to—and *we are determined to force the Convocation to a resolution on the subject*—we have made up our minds what to do. Unless the brethren can be brought to see it to be their duty to take up this position, we must take it up by ourselves and those who will adhere to us. How many these may be, remains to be seen. Chalmers, Gordon, Bruce, Candlish, Brown, Sym, Tweedie, Buchanan, Cunningham, and myself among the City ministers, and a number of the Chapel men, with Dr. Clason, are those of us here who have made up their minds that, unless our wrongs are speedily redressed, we must give the State to know that we consider the connection sinful, and cannot, in common honour and honesty, receive the pay of the State on conditions we cannot fulfil.

"What grieves me and distresses me is to think of the triumph of the ungodly, how they will tell it in Gath, when many remain in, after a considerable section—and these not the meanest men in the Church—have left. The damage this will do to the cause of religion no tongue can tell; and the men who remain from really pure motives, who cannot see that in con-



science they are free to leave, will be much to be pitied. The world will give them no credit for any conscience in the matter. They will live with impaired usefulness, and go down to the grave with a damaged, at least suspected character.

"I will urge no man to go. Unless he in deliberate judgment, and with a clear conscience, sees it his duty to go, we don't want him. For the sake of religion I trust they may be brought to see this to be their duty. But for *that*, the fewer that go the better for us; we have no temporal interest in getting many to go.

"Dunlop, Hamilton, Candlish, Gordon, and others do not entertain the most remote expectation of the State listening to any, even the most reasonable demands we may make. They look on the fate of our party as sealed. Would three or four hundred men stand true to their principles, and show themselves ready to march, I would not despair; but of any such number I confess I despair. Lord Cockburn said yesterday to Hamilton that the Church *must* go down, and that he has been satisfied of that for two years past.

"Chalmers told me the other day that he knew one gentleman who was to give £200 per year to us, if we were obliged to go, and of three or four men who had resolved to give up their carriages, &c. He is in high feather, go or stay.

"May the Lord listen to the prayers of His people!"

Predictions that the Convocation would prove a failure were widespread. Thus Mr. Guthrie writes:—"Maitland\* has been saying to Craufurd\* that it will be a complete failure. 'What,' said Craufurd, 'would you call it a failure if two hundred were to attend? Would you call *that* a failure?' 'No,' says Maitland, 'but catch two hundred of them coming up for such a purpose!'" The actual result was all the more remarkable. Not two hundred, but four hundred and sixty-five ministers, and these out of every county from Caithness to Wigton, appeared in Roxburgh Church, Edinburgh, in the gloomy

\* Afterwards Judges of the Court of Session, under the titles of Lord Dindrennan and Lord Airdmillan.



month of November. It was the largest number of ministers (elders were on this occasion excluded) that had ever met in council in Scotland. "The numbers, however," says Lord Cockburn in his Journal (I. 337), "are infinitely less material than the public character of the men. This band contains the whole chivalry of the Church."

In order to give to the deliberations a practical character and a definite aim, two great questions were singled out for discussion. First, What is our grievance and the remedy for it? Second, What, if that remedy be refused, is it the duty of the Church to do? The proceedings were strictly private, and no detailed record of them has ever been published. From Mr. Guthrie's very full letters to Brechin we select some passages:—

"EDINBURGH, 19th November, 1842.

"The first point was the full bearing of the Auchterarder decision, &c., and the element or elements indispensable to a remedy, without which we would submit to no Bill. This pointed to a complete security of all interference of the Civil Courts in our Courts Ecclesiastical,\* complete independence of jurisdiction. We were all agreed on the bearing of the decision, and the multifarious invasions of the Civil Courts.

\* That is to say, in so far as these Courts confine themselves to spiritual matters. The Church never denied that her courts might go wrong just as she averred the Civil Courts had done; she admitted that they might trench on things civil just as the Court of Session had done on things spiritual. But, contrary to the Popish view, she frankly conceded to the Civil Courts what she claimed for herself—their right to refuse civil effects to such encroachments as she refused spiritual. In addition, it must be observed that in Scotland (whatever may have been the case in other countries) there has never been found any practical difficulty in distinguishing between the civil and spiritual provinces. There was no such difficulty before the Disruption: the judges themselves admitted that the acts they interfered with were spiritual in their nature.



"Dr. McFarlane opened the subject in a statement of some half-hour long, to a convocation of some 460 men. I calculated right. I calculated 100 of our party who *could* not come, another 100 who *would* not come. After him Carment and some of the grey-heads spoke. Then came the tug of war. Paul of the West Church tabled a *Liberum Arbitrium* motion as the remedy. Smith of Lochwinnoch seconded it, and in doing so denied that our constitution was injured, or could be so, and for that gave four reasons, enlarging on them. Then came Begg, who was acting for Wilson of Carmyllie, &c., and some extreme men like himself, men not prepared to take their stand on this ground—that they would cut the connection unless speedily relieved from these invasions and shackles of the civil tyranny,—and he tabled an anti-patronage motion.

"Now what we wanted to settle was not only what was the *best* settlement of the question, but what was that without which, unless speedily granted, we would renounce our connection with the State. At this point I struck in, clearing the ground of Smith and his four points, and then taking up Begg and his party. The result was that to-day, after a good deal of speaking, and a most admirable speech from Chalmers, and some verbal alterations, both Paul and Begg withdrew their motions, and, amid much thankfulness, the House came to a unanimous conclusion in favour of the resolutions, only six men declining to vote.

"Chalmers, who has great practical wisdom, but sometimes pushes things too far, and who was dead-set on the Convocation attending only in the meantime to the point of the encroachments (though he avowed anti-patronage sentiments, and would rejoice to support them in proper time and place), made a most ingenious and earnest speech, to the effect that we should record nothing in our minutes about anti-patronage; Paul saying that he would not agree that anything should be recorded. I spoke again, to the effect that I could not comply with Chalmers's request, giving my reasons for it, and as to Mr. Paul I gave notice that if he persevered in his opposition, I would also on Monday night divide the house, and insist that the relative numbers should be sent up to Government. Dr. McFarlane declared if this were done he would leave the Convocation. I was backed by Candlish, &c., and so it was agreed to, and then, amid much joy and thankfulness among all, we joined in singing and prayer, and so closed this day about three o'clock.

"The resolutions are abundantly stringent, and we bind ourselves not to submit to any measure which does not



thoroughly and effectually guard the Church against all pains and penalties, encroachments, &c., claiming all our independence, adhering to our fundamental principle, and condemning the Act of Patronage as unjustifiable. The fact is, that we claim a jurisdiction so independent, that the State will never grant it from anything but the fear of a total disruption, and I think we have well prepared for Monday, because, unless our party will now resolve between this and the Assembly at farthest to declare that, unless this is granted, they will dissolve the connection, there is not a shadow of a chance of our getting what we ask." (*To his brother Patrick.*)

"EDINBURGH, 21st November, 1842.

"I wrote Patrick on Saturday, and you would see our proceedings down to that day.

"The resolution then adopted has, in my opinion, settled our course. We have demanded our full jurisdiction—the most offensive demand we could make. I believe we would have fewer difficulties to overcome in seeking the total abolition of patronage. Our deputations all said that there was nothing so offensive to the mere politicians as our demand for full security from the review or interference of the Civil Courts. Lord Cottenham, the only friend we have among the chancellors, was full of urbanity and kindness till the jurisdiction was touched on, and then he bristled up like a hedgehog, and quite lost his temper.

"Some of our friends are now convinced of this, and are thereby more inclined for the high step of declaring that we cut unless our grievances are speedily and thoroughly redressed. Unless they do this in such numbers as to tell on the country and legislature, we have not a shadow of a chance of getting what we demand; and I am happy to say that the hand of God is seen in a great change in the minds of many since they came here.

"I don't think I will speak again, unless very needful. I was thankful that I had rendered some effective service by my speech on Friday; and, unless very much needed, don't think it proper again to speak when there are so many other men in prominent places who have not yet opened their mouths." (*To Provost Guthrie.*)

The necessity which Mr. Guthrie did not anticipate actually arose on the following day. His letter referring



to it has not been preserved ; but we find an abstract of his speech in a private record of the Convocation proceedings to which we have obtained access.

The question of the Church's grievances and its appropriate remedy having been disposed of, the more difficult point remained for consideration,—what, if the State refuses the remedy which we consider essential to our efficiency as a Christian Church, is it our duty to do ? A set of resolutions (concurred in by 354 ministers) was passed, setting forth “that it is the duty of the faithful ministers of the Church not to retain their endowments or to persist in their present conflict with the civil power, after the State, by refusing to redress the existing grievances, shall have virtually made it a condition of enjoying the temporal benefits of the Establishment that they shall be subject to civil control in matters spiritual, and bound against their consciences to intrude ministers upon reclaiming congregations.” In support of these resolutions, Mr. Guthrie said—

“Mr. ——— spoke as if we intended to drive men to a conclusion now. So far from that, I beseech no one to go out with me without a clear judgment and a true conscience, just because I could not expect the blessing of God on that man's conduct. My friend seems to think it a mere matter of *expediency* whether we shall go out just now or not. Sir, it is much more than that. I hold that, as an honest man, I cannot take the State's pay without doing her bidding ; and, therefore, our opinion is, that the State should just have a reasonable



time to decide what she is to insist on our doing; and after that reasonable time, if she refuse redress, I must cut my connection with her altogether. Some people would say this would be no declaration of hostility on the part of the State. I wonder what they would call a declaration of hostility? When I go to the State complaining of its servants, and the State not only refuses to protect me, but takes the very sword with which it swore to protect me and points it to my breast, if this be not a declaration of hostility, I ask what is?

“Now in regard to the question of expediency, how does the case stand? What are we to do with all who decline the Church’s authority? Are we to allow the reins of discipline to lie in the dust? I have heard men say we ought to suspend these sixty rebels of the Synod of Aberdeen from their judicial functions! Suspend them from their judicial functions! Why, sir, suppose a British subject had done some wrong, and that he were to call in a body of French soldiers to his assistance, and these French soldiers were to interrupt the officers of justice and resist them in their attempts to punish the criminal—what would the authorities do to them? Suspend them from their judicial functions? Aye, sir, they would suspend them, but it would be *by the neck!* (Laughter.) Let any man who would be for going on with the discipline of the Church consider where he would be driving us to. Let Mr. Elder consider what state religion would be placed in in this town if he had to go to St. Stephen’s to depose Dr. Muir, and then Dr.



Muir would come to St. Paul's to depose him; or if I had to depose Mr. Hunter, and then Mr. Hunter should depose me. Why, this is a deed that my hand will never do.

"What Mr. Begg said about lawsuits was really amusing. He said we should be done with them. I would be done with them with all my heart; but the rub is, they won't have done with me, and that's enough to settle the point.

"Sir, it has been my dream by night and my thought by day (and intensely have I thought upon it), that there is just one thing my Reverend Fathers and Brethren should take into account,—not what is their duty to the Established Church, but what is their duty to the Church of Christ. Let us not take thought for the temporalities. I am indifferent to them, and I don't care a straw for ———'s speech last night. I have a higher speech from the Master I serve, who said: 'There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time and in the world to come life everlasting.'"

*"EDINBURGH, 26th November, 1842.*

"I am sure that you would all be greatly delighted and refreshed with the proceedings of our Convocation. Its result is the most remarkable event that ever came within my experience, and can be accounted for only on the belief that God has remarkably answered the prayers of his people in a remarkable effusion of His grace and spirit.

"There were many very natural and exciting reasons why the brethren should have come to another decision, or, at least, why they should not have come to this with such remarkable



unanimity. There was a pretty strong jealousy among them (encouraged by their fears and fanned eagerly by our enemies) of the Edinburgh clergy, or 'clique,' as it has been called. Many of them came to town with the secret purpose of committing themselves to nothing. Most of them came up most averse, if not doggedly and resolutely opposed, to our plans; and even after they came here they had not scrupled to oppose, nay, even in some measure to speak of them with scorn. Their regard (a false regard, no doubt) to consistency, their prejudices, and, above all, their very natural fears of future support—these all stood in the way of them agreeing to our bold and determined plans, and all these were overcome. This we are all taking as a token for good; and though I long stood alone in entertaining any hope at all of a favourable issue, hope in the hearts of many is now beginning again to stir, and give an expression of itself. Many of the enemy are confounded, and are covered with shame. May their shame be followed by repentance!

"Maitland thinks that Peel will weigh well the matter before he treats such a declaration as a piece of waste paper. We are now, in a sense, in the situation in which they required us to be before they would entertain our demands—admitting, as they called it, 'the claims of the law.' There were two ways of doing this. One, to stay in and obey—*that* we could not do; the other, since we could not obey, to go out as soon as it is ascertained that the deeds and principles of the servants are approved of and homologated by their masters.

"We had usually three prayers at every diet; and I never heard such and so many remarkable prayers. When comparing our Convocation with the Assembly, and looking round on a body of men all holding the same principles, and more or less animated with the same spirit, we all felt that it would more than counterbalance many of the privations we might have to suffer, to be rid of the Moderates, of whom, indeed, we should, if possible, have been rid long ago.

"——, poor fellow, I was very sorry for. Though he would not acknowledge it, he had his fears for his family to contend with. He was clean careworn and cast down; but since he has done the deed, crossed the Rubicon, he is now better in spirits, but very keen to cling to hopes that Sir Robert Peel will be compelled to set things to rights. He has the courage of a man who would die bravely enough amid the excitement of a battle-field, but whose firmness fails him amid the still and solemn quietness of an execution. It was an act doubtless of great grace and courage with many;



and I am happy to say that it was done by almost all with no hope of our grievances being redressed. This was not held out to them: the whole drift and bearing of the addresses were to prepare men's minds for expulsion."

Following on the proceedings at the Convocation it was resolved that the people, over the length and breadth of Scotland, should be made thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the crisis, and the resolutions taken by the ministers of the Church.

"EDINBURGH, 15th December, 1842.

"We, the clergy, have apportioned out the whole land, from Maiden Kirk to Cape Wrath, to different bodies of men. Every parish, whether it be in the possession of friend or foe, is to be visited; and men must lay their account with being some two or three weeks away from their pulpits and people. I picked out the Presbyteries of Haddington and Dunbar. The first is a very sound one, so far as the clergy are concerned; but the lords and lairds are very fierce, and most of the big farmers are against us.

"The people here (not excepting the folks of the Bow and Grassmarket) are in a very lively and resolute state. For example, Lord Medwyn's servant, whom I accommodated, you may remember, in my seat, came over to me last week with £2, for the service of the Church. I proposed that, instead of giving it away at present, I would, with her leave, put it in the bank; when she told me that I might do so if I chose; 'But,' she added, 'I am laying by money at present in the Savings Bank for that very purpose.' Yesterday a Highland woman (a namesake of our own, from the braes of Lochaber), a member of my Church and a servant in town, came with eight shillings for the service of the Church also; though I learned by cross-examination that she had her father in the Highlands to support. My parishioners have fixed on the site of two old houses for the new church, and I hear of tradesmen who are resolute to give their £1 per year for a sitting. I have no doubt, from the way that public feeling is rising and running, that our opponents will be astonished by-and-by. Dr. Aiton was breakfasting with me this morning. He is clean frightened, and anticipates nothing but sheer ruin to his own—the Moderate party—if we go out. . . .



"Few men agree with me, yet I don't altogether despair of a settlement. Peel will, I am persuaded, bring in a Bill which, if it won't please us, will be made so as if possible to entrap us." (*To his sister Clementina.*)

"PRESTONKIRK, 27th January, 1843.

"Last night I set off to Stenton, and addressed about one thousand people in a magnificent barn. I kept them up for two hours and a half, and five hundred of them were on their feet for three hours and a half, and this after working all day, and many of them travelling some four or five miles. It was a noble meeting. To-night I address the folks here, and a larger audience is expected. I never stood an expedition half so well as this. Before facing the night air, and after sweating like a horse, I always drink a great dose of very hot water qualified with a little milk, which keeps me in a glow till I get home. I have never spoken less than two hours. I am beginning' to think that I will, after the trial of this nightly work, be a capital itinerary preacher, and will match Whitefield himself! The real secret is, eat plenty, lie eight or nine hours in bed; and, above all, *drink nothing stronger than cold water.* . . .

"—, in view of my meeting last night, made some statements to his people on Sabbath which have fairly finished him. He had the downright idiotism to tell them that with his large family it was no easy matter to say that he would go out. Poor man! as if God could not fill ten mouths as well as two!" (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

"The last act of this eventful drama," says Dr. Buchanan, the historian of the "Ten Years' Conflict," "was now at hand. When the curtain closed on the Convocation, it had become evident to thinking men that the next time it was raised it would reveal a still more striking scene. Already, behind the screen of that temporary obscurity into which the actors retired when they disappeared from Roxburgh Church and withdrew into the privacy of their own parishes and homes, there might be heard the busy preparation and the



hurrying tread of those whose next movement was destined to consummate the Disruption of the Church of Scotland."

One thing alone remained to be done: the decision of the Crown and the Legislature must be obtained. The Crown had been appealed to in the Church's "Claim of Rights," forwarded to Her Majesty in May, 1842, but, up to the end of the year, no answer was received. Little hope, however, was entertained that the reply would be favourable. It had become evident, in the course of the many negotiations with both Whig and Tory governments, that Ministers were unable to comprehend, not to say sympathize with, the position of the Church of Scotland. Nor did they know the kind of men they had to deal with. They seemed unable to estimate the depth of conviction among the Evangelical clergy; and believed, on the testimony of some persons in Scotland who should have known better, that, by determined resistance to the Church's claims, the vast body, when the testing time came, would yield, and remain where they were.\*

What Mr. Guthrie felt most keenly of all was the

\* History often repeats itself. It was the same in 1662 when Charles II.—not contented with the despotic maxim of his royal contemporary Louis XIV., "*L'état c'est moi*," but adding to it this other significant sentence, "*L'église c'est moi*"—restored Prelacy and the Royal Supremacy in matters spiritual. Bishop Fairfoul, when urging on the act, assured Commissioner Middleton that there would not be ten in his diocese who would not prefer sacrificing their principles to losing their stipends. Commissioner Middleton believed him; and the result was that, on the first Sabbath of the winter of 1662, there were 200 parish churches shut up in Scotland, while 376 ministers in all vacated their livings.



suspicion thereby cast on the honour of his brethren. At a meeting in 1842, he said—

“Some say—Oh, there’s no fear of any mischief—the danger is all imaginary. How so, pray? ‘Oh,’ said Mr. So-and-so (a person of some influence and power), the other day, to an acquaintance of mine, ‘the fact is, there’s Candlish, and Cunningham, and Brown, and Guthrie, and some five or six more firebrands,—we have only to quench them, and all will be peace.’ Now, my lord, I do think that if the Ministers of the Crown believe this, they stand on the very brink of destruction to the country; and if I had a voice that would go to London, I would tell them of their miserable infatuation,—I would tell them not to think of thrusting out merely some five or six of us. In my heart I wish they were told that, if there is to be any thrusting out at all, if men are honest, it must be an out-thrusting of five or six hundred.”\*

At another meeting, held a month before the Disruption, he referred to the same calumny:—

“Our opponents went the length of saying that we were anxious for the glory of martyrdom. Sir, there are some men who cannot comprehend the feeling of the ancient Roman, who spurred his horse into the gulf, that Rome might be saved. As to martyrdom, I believe it is no better than it is called! Sir, I have been in the Calton Jail—not as a prisoner, however, although I once expected to be there as a prisoner—† but I am certainly one of the men, who, according to the old saying, ‘would rather hear the laverock [lark] sing, than the mouse cheep,’ any day.

\* Shortly after the Disruption, Mr. Guthrie thus expressed himself:—  
“Down to the day of the Disruption the Government and the leading men in Scotland did not believe that above thirty or forty ministers would leave the Church. Had they only imagined that there would be a secession of 500, I believe we should not have been here.” He adds, “I don’t regret, however, being here. Far from it. I am a happier man than ever I was. I always coveted the condition of the Volunteers at the very time I was combating their principles.”

† Mr. Guthrie, in breaking the Strathbogie interdict, had rendered himself liable to imprisonment.



"One thing, however, I may observe, and it is this, that the low secular calculations made, regarding the number of the clergy who are to go out, reconciles me, more than ever, more than anything else, to the thought of making the sacrifice. Alas! the ministerial character is sunk low indeed when men could believe that five hundred ministers—notwithstanding their sacred office, notwithstanding their most solemn vows, notwithstanding their written, repeated, published pledges—would give up their principles, to keep their pay. I say, if we had done so, we would have set an example of public profligacy such as has seldom been paralleled even among the mere politicians of the world, and such as in infamy never would have been surpassed—no, Sir, not even in the House of Commons in the days of Walpole—and a blow would have been inflicted on the very vitals of evangelical religion such as it never sustained before.

"Talk of fines and imprisonments, there is something worse—and we suffer what is worse when foul suspicions are entertained, that, notwithstanding all we have said and done, when what Wodrow calls 'the choke' comes, we will after all give way. Now, Sir, we are waiting for the General Assembly, and I am thankful that the day is not far distant when these suspicions shall be rolled away, and when the world, if they would not believe it before, will believe it when they see it; and when, Sir, if they do not confess, they at least will feel, that they have done me and my brethren cruel and gross injustice."

At last, on 4th January, 1843, a reply was received from the Crown to the Church's Claim of Rights. It was signed by Sir James Graham, and was evidently designed to be conclusive. Pronouncing the Church's claim to be "unreasonable," it intimated that the Government "could not advise Her Majesty to acquiesce in these demands." Nothing now remained but to obtain a judgment from Parliament itself as to whether the Civil Courts or the Church Courts were constitutionally right in their respective contentions. Should the hostile voice of the Crown, uttered through the



executive Government, be supported by a similar utterance from either of the two Houses of Parliament, the Church must then hold that the question was decided, and that her share in this protracted and painful warfare was at length at an end.

The subject was brought before the House of Commons on 7th March, 1843, by the Hon. Fox Maule. "Grave as the question was, and momentous as were the interests which it involved," we read in an account of the scene, "it did not succeed in collecting as many as half the members of the Lower House of Parliament to hear it debated. A railway bill has often proved a more potent spell with which to conjure members from the clubs and dinner-parties of the metropolis than a cause on which there hung the integrity and stability of a great national religious institution, and the worldly fortunes of hundreds of ministers of Christ." Very differently was it viewed in Scotland. "Eventful night this in the British Parliament!" wrote Robert McCheyne to a friend, within a few days of his own death—"Once more King Jesus stands at an earthly tribunal, and they know Him not!"

That night found Mr. Guthrie speaking in the City Hall, Glasgow, to an audience of four thousand persons:—

"Would to God," he said, "that He would this night take into His hand the hearts of our senators, and open their eyes before it be too late! 'The knell,' Lord Dalhousie said a few years ago in the General Assembly, when it vindicated anew the principle of the Veto Act, 'the knell of the Church of Scotland is now rung.' It was not rung then, but I believe it is ringing this night in London. The eleventh hour has struck.



The last battle is now, at this moment, fighting on the floors of Parliament. The voices of Maule, and Rutherford, and Stewart—and I can hardly mention, in that House of five hundred men, more than these three that will stand up for our rights—they are pleading our cause; and did I not know that God rules on earth as well as in heaven, you might write ‘Ichabod’ already on the brow of Scotland. I confess I have no hope. My motion says it is our duty to use every lawful effort to avert this calamity. Now we *have* used every lawful effort. We have petitioned—we have remonstrated—we have negotiated. . . . We have resolved never to give up our principles. We shall leave the Church. We shall give them their stipends, their manses, their glebes, and their churches. These are theirs, and let them ‘make a kirk or a mill’ of them. But we cannot give them up the crown rights of Christ, and we cannot give them up our people’s privileges.

“I stand here, and make the confession that I have made in many assemblies. I now doubt whether, in the present ungodly state of this world, a union betwixt Church and State is an expedient thing. I say here, our fathers have all along been compelled to contend for their religious liberties. John Knox fought for them, when he cradled our Church of Scotland. The history of the Church of Scotland has been a history of aggression on the part of the State, of suffering and resistance on the part of the Church; and if this night, in Parliament, they refuse to hear our claims—if they turn a deaf ear to our remonstrances—if this night, in Parliament, they say you must sell your birthright for a mess of pottage, then I say am done for my lifetime with the Establishment.”

Mr. Maule’s motion for a Committee of Inquiry was lost upon a division by 211 to 76; but it is noticeable that, of the 37 Scotch members present at the division, 25 voted with Mr. Maule.

“What then remained for us?” said Mr. Guthrie. “We could not continue the painful and unseemly spectacle of remaining in the Establishment, and resisting the orders of the State. Much as we loved the walls of



our old Church, unwilling as we were to leave them, we felt compelled to go. And, as the Pilgrim Fathers, the old Puritans of England, the founders of the great American Republic, crossed the seas, and sought, in the untrodden forests of the New World, the liberty they were denied at home, we went forth under the old banner to enjoy that freedom without the Establishment which we were denied within its pale."

The General Assembly, on which such important issues hung, was convened on the 18th of May, 1843. On the morning of that day, as, with a friend, he was quitting the door of his house in Lauriston Lane, Mr. Guthrie turned round for a moment to his wife, and said in resolute yet cheerful tones—"Well, Anne, this is the last time I go out at this door a minister of an Established Church!" Looking back through the vista of nearly twenty years, he thus spoke in 1862:—

"There is something more eloquent than speech. I am bold to say that Hall, Foster, or Chalmers never preached a sermon so impressive or sublime as the humblest minister of our Church did on the 18th day of May, 1843, when he gave up his living to retain his principles, and joined the crowd that, bursting from the doors of St. Andrew's Church, with Chalmers at its head, marched out file by file in steady ranks—giving God's people, who anxiously thronged the streets, occasion to weep tears, not of grief, but of joy, as they cried, 'They come! They come! Thank God, they come.' . . . We did not come out a small and scattered band; but, on



the day of the Disruption, burst out of St. Andrew's Church as a river bursts from a glacier—a river at its birth. In numbers, in position, in wealth, as well as in piety, our Church, I may say, was full grown on the day it was born. Above all, and next to the prayers which sanctified our cause, we were followed by a host of countrymen, whose enthusiasm had been kindled at the ashes of martyrs, and who saw in our movement but another phase of the grand old days that won Scotland her fame, and made her a name and a praise in the whole earth."

In times more recent, we have seen the clergy of another Church compelled to forego the advantages of State connection ; but in Scotland, thirty years ago, the spectacle presented was that of nearly five hundred ministers *disestablishing and disendowing themselves*;—laying on the altar of conscience a revenue of more than one hundred thousand pounds a year,—a sum which, if capitalized, amounts to fully two millions sterling. "These men are mad, and the pity is, there is no lunatic asylum big enough to hold them!" said one of their bitterest opponents. It was a poor joke. How different the tone of the Premier of Great Britain, when, on the floor of the House of Commons in 1870, he described the Free Church of Scotland in its exodus as "a body to whose moral attitude scarcely any word weaker or lower than that of majesty is, according to the spirit of historical criticism, justly applicable."

The number of ministers—four hundred and seventy-



four—who quitted the Establishment for conscience sake was great. But the quality of the men was even more noteworthy than their number. Within their ranks was contained beyond controversy a very large proportion of the talent and piety of the Scottish ministry.\* It has been sometimes alleged that the step these men took was the result more of excitement and popular clamour than deliberate conviction. Had that been so, the ministers in the great cities might have gone forth; but their brethren in the remoter parts of the kingdom should have remained undisturbed. What was the fact? In the distant highlands of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness—districts where the tone of religion and morality is exceptionally high—three-fourths of the whole ministers quitted church, manse, and stipend at the Disruption, and were followed by their people almost to a man.

A fact still more significant remains. Were one asked to single out from among the ministry of a church the men of special consecration to Christ's cause, and who from their very circumstances were removed from all influence of party excitement, he would name the labourers in the foreign field: the decision of the missionaries of the Church of Scotland was, therefore, naturally looked forward to with special interest by both parties in the Church. Speaking on the 24th of May, 1843, and before

\* "Mr. Norman McLeod complains (in the Established Church Assembly) that we have kindled a fire in the old house and left them to put it out. It is my opinion that we have taken away well-nigh all the fire along with us. And I will just say that, if there is any fire remaining, we have left plenty of cold-water engines to put it out!" Speech of Mr. Guthrie in the Free Church Assembly, 24th May, 1843.



the course they were to pursue could be ascertained, Mr. Guthrie said :—"The missionaries have not yet opened their mouths on this question. They must, within a period of three months, raise their voice, and I venture to say—I will stake the whole cause on it—that not the voice of one single missionary will be lifted up for those we have left but for us." It was a bold and, some thought, a rash prediction; yet the result fully verified it. With Dr. Duff at their head, every foreign missionary of the Church of Scotland in 1843 sent home his adherence to the out-going party.

The attitude of sympathy assumed by the Evangelical Dissenters was peculiarly gratifying; for, as Mr. Guthrie said, "their pecuniary interest was that we should stay in. And how? I'll tell you how. If we had stayed in, many of our people would have gone out. Yes, sir, if we had broken down in Edinburgh, there would not have been a vacant sitting in any Evangelical Dissenting Meeting-house; every one of them would have been filled to the very door." On the first Sunday after the Disruption, Mr. Guthrie found shelter with his congregation in the Methodist chapel in Nicolson Square, and there he preached till his new church on the Castle Hill was erected. Out of a kirk-session of twenty-four members, only two were left behind, and the proportion of the congregation who remained was equally small.

The crash of the Disruption resounded over the whole kingdom. The Nonconformists in England—Independents,



Wesleyans, and Baptists—and the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales hastened to offer their sympathy and admiration, and poured many thousands of pounds into the treasury of the Free Church. The Irish Presbyterian Church sent its deputation, as of old, to address the General Assembly in 1843. When they reached Edinburgh they had to choose between remaining with the Established Church or following the Seceders to Canonmills. Their resolution was taken without hesitation. In Mr. Guthrie's own words, spoken towards the end of that Disruption year, "When they came, as one of them said, they had to go in search of the Church of Scotland; and where did they find her? Up yonder, sir? Up yonder they found the dragoons, and they found the Commissioner, and they found the boys, sir, with powdered heads and little swords! But, whatever the Irish Deputation found, they did not find the Church of Scotland up there." Christians in other lands joined in the tribute. "The Scottish Church Question," by the Rev. Adolphus Sydow, Chaplain to the King of Prussia, is a very powerful argument, and one peculiarly valuable from the impartiality of its author. Mrs. Gordon, in her "Home Life of Sir David Brewster," tells how her illustrious father—himself an enthusiastic Free Churchman—on hearing that a friend had taken the opposite side in the controversy, remarked, "It CAN only be because he has not studied the subject; he must read Sydow."

In June, 1843, Mr. Guthrie formed one of a deputation which visited the chief towns of England to expound



the principles of the Free Church :—"The people of England," he said, in a speech on his return, "did not help us out of *ity*, but on principle. We made no lachrymose stories to them. In fact, it was suggested to us by one of our best friends—I mean Mr. Bunting, son of the celebrated Dr. Jabez Bunting—that we were not the right sort of deputation at all; that we were far too merry-looking men; that the deputation ought to have been composed of rueful, lachrymose-looking fellows—men more like martyrs than we were, who would have had a much greater effect upon the people of England. Why, my lord, a clear conscience makes a sunny face, and it is not easy for a man to look unhappy who feels himself far better with a hole in his coat than a hole in his character any day!"

"EDINBURGH, 16th July, 1843.

"Our reception in England exceeded expectation. We were received by Methodists, Congregationalists, &c., with the warmest-hearted kindness. Our cause and question promises to form a bond of union, or an occasion of it, among Evangelical Dissenters throughout the kingdom.

"The impression is spreading and deepening in the minds of all men that the doom of Establishments in this country has been sealed in the issue of our Church question; and that, with the state of matters in Scotland, with Puseyism in England, with Dan O'Connell in Ireland, their fate and fall are not very far distant.\*

\* When the struggle in Scotland was thickening, the Duke of Wellington is said to have remarked :—"The battle of religious Establishments is about to be fought, and Scotland is the battle-ground;"—when that struggle was over, Dr. Cooke, of Belfast, who enjoyed the confidence of Sir Robert Peel, thus wrote on 20th May, 1843, to the Premier : "I am a Presbyterian by conviction; yet for my friends' and brethren's sakes, I am as anxious to prevent the overthrow of the Established Churches of England and Ireland, as I was to prevent the Disruption of the Established Church of Scot-



"We finished with a magnificent meeting in Liverpool. I should fancy that there were four thousand people in the theatre. I never saw such a splendid company. Cunningham and I, with the others, were upon the stage; Anne was in the manager's box; the lights were all there, and so were the scenes; and of all the places I ever spoke from, commend me to the stage!

"I was introduced to a number of members of Parliament, and had a crack with Lord Campbell."\* (*To Provost Guthrie.*)

The progress of the Free Church since its rise in 1843 is matter of history. No wonder that, after an experience of twenty years, Dr. Guthrie thus spoke from the Moderator's chair of the Free Church Assembly in 1862—

"Fathers and Brethren,—When we take into account the energy that characterized the Established Church previous to 1843, the career of glory and of good that

land. . . . But that the Disruption of the Church of Scotland, which is held to be the fault of the Government, will be followed by the overthrow of the others, I entertain no more doubt than I do of my own existence. The evil will begin in Ireland, it matters little where it will end." "How remarkable!" we remember Dr. Guthrie exclaiming one morning in 1871 at his breakfast table, as he called us to listen to this letter, which he had just come upon in Porter's 'Life of Cooke.' "One would think that man must have had the gift of prophecy!"

\* Mr. Guthrie preached while in London in Regent Square Church. Among the audience was Lord Campbell, who had given his decision in the House of Lords very strongly against the Church. The *Fife Sentinel* of the day reports that at the conclusion of the sermon he said to a reverend doctor sitting beside him, "If this be a fair specimen of the ministers of the Free Church, it has nothing to fear." In a recent letter Dr. Guthrie refers to the same occasion: "Campbell heard me the first time I preached in London, immediately after the Disruption. His love for the old country made him uphold a Scotchman, notwithstanding he was a Disruptionist. I remember dining with him at Hastie's. He was most agreeable and courteous. It was there Lord Charles Russell and he stood so long bowing to each other at the drawing-room door; and I learned to my astonishment—on Lord Charles, though called so only by courtesy, at length taking precedence of a baron and the Lord Chief Justice of England—that the son of a Duke takes rank before an ordinary peer."



lay before her, how near she was to the rare position of possessing a State endowment with a popular constitution, and how probable it seemed that, after recent wounds were healed, many, very many, who had been driven by patrons and patronage from her pale, would return to her bosom—the Disruption had, in my eye, many of the features of a mysterious event. It seemed to bode ill for Scotland; and not the least strange feature of it was the way that it fell out—in men, themselves men of honour, doubting ours; in instruments, themselves weak, being armed with formidable powers of mischief; and in astute and long-headed statesmen committing such a blunder as the Frenchman would have pronounced worse than a crime.\* It is not for us, Fathers and Brethren, to scan the ways of Providence. Nevertheless, may we not find the solution of the mystery in an idea which was fondly and strongly dwelt on, in my hearing, by the Chevalier Bunsen, in an interview I had with that distinguished man in his beautiful villa on the banks of the Neckar,

\* Two of these statesmen, Lord Aberdeen and Sir James Graham, lived to lament their error. "Be it remembered to their praise, and to the honour of their memory," said Dr. Guthrie in 1862, "that the two great statesmen, who were made the tools of a miserable party on this side the border, the one publicly on the floor of the House of Commons, and the other, to my knowledge, privately, did confess that the one act of their lives which they looked back on with the deepest regret was the part they had been then led to play." The late Mr. Murray Dunlop, M.P., speaking at Carlisle on the 26th September, 1862, and alluding to Dr. Guthrie's statement, said, "I think it right to confirm that statement by stating what Sir James Graham said to myself about a year or two before his death. He said, in a very earnest tone and manner, 'I have never ceased to deplore the part I took in your Scotch Church affairs.'" This testimony is fully borne out in the "Life of Sir James Graham," by Mr. McCullagh Torrens, M.P., vol. ii., p. 232.



where he had retired from public life to spend the evening of his days in literature and theological pursuits.

"No one in this Assembly will suspect me of having any sympathy with the errors of Bunsen; but I think it only justice to the memory of that distinguished man to say that I never met one of a purer or nobler spirit, or left the company of any man more impressed with the feeling that I had been in the presence of one who held communion with the skies, and walked closely with his God. . . . . Our conversation naturally turned on the Free Church: and you can fancy how pleasant it was to me, far from Scotland, and amid the vine-clad hills of Germany, to hear such a man as Bunsen expatiate with rapture on us and on our cause; and, with the tear glistening in his eye, and emotion beaming in his countenance, tell with what interest he had watched our progress, and with what fervour he had prayed for our success. The idea that had seized his mind, and on which he dwelt so eloquently, was this—that God had, in His providence, raised us up in this country, and placed us in circumstances favourable for its solution, to try the problem, whether a Church, without aid or countenance from the State, could, by the resources of its own members and nothing else, fulfil the two grand objects of every living being—sustain and extend itself."



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE MANSE FUND.

"WAIT five years, at longest, and this Free Kirk excitement will have spent its force," was the prophecy, thirty years ago, of some in whose case the wish was father to the thought. Long ere that period had expired, however, the rashness of the prediction was abundantly apparent.

Never did the warmth of spring break up the frost of a northern winter more wonderfully than the glow of Christian sympathy and zeal unsealed the fountains of liberality in Scotland. When it was announced that the sum of £363,871 had been raised by the Free Church during the first year of her existence, even her friends feared that a revenue like this could not long be maintained. Thirty-one years have come and gone; in the interval, her adherents have raised close on eleven millions sterling; yet her income was larger last year (1873-4) than in any previous twelvemonths since the Disruption. It is a significant fact that the sum of £511,000, raised last year by the Free Church, is nearly double the whole State revenue of the Scottish Establi-



ment. "The youngest of these free religious associations, —the Free Church of Scotland," writes Baron Bunsen— "which has grown under our eyes in the most recent changes, has, alongside of a very respectable but somewhat ossified National Church, put forth an amount of moral activity which pales the glory of all the State churches in the world."

When one contemplates the present position of the Free Church; her organization at home, and her influence abroad; her nine hundred churches, her eight hundred mansees, her Divinity Halls at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen; her income of half a million sterling; it is scarcely possible to realise the exigencies and the trials of the period which immediately succeeded the Disruption.

To men in Mr. Guthrie's position, indeed, the leaving of the State Church involved no serious sacrifice, either in status or circumstances:—"I know that on my country brethren," were his own words, "has lain the burden and heat of the day. It fell comparatively little on us in the towns.\* We saw the wave of the Disruption coming; it broke over us, and we were little the worse. But it was different in country parishes. The wave of the Disruption came; the ministers saw it plainly and faced it boldly, but it broke over them, and left many amid the wreck of their worldly all."

\* The difference even in his own case was, however, quite appreciable. Before the Disruption Mr. Guthrie's professional income had averaged £500. For several years after 1843 it was little above £400; and at no period of his life did it exceed £550.



The extent of the sacrifices made by the country ministers will never be fully known; they were not the kind of men to parade their trials. But, now that thirty years have passed away, and a deeper silence has sealed the lips of all but a few survivors, it is well that Mr. Guthrie has preserved for us some record of these days; the more,—as has been justly remarked of these reminiscences of his—that “there is not so much heroism among us that we can afford to lose from the annals of this easy-going modern time so startling a narrative.”\* Here are two cases with which he met shortly before the Disruption took place:—

“A minister in a certain district of country said to me, ‘You think there is no chance of a settlement?’ ‘No,’ said I, ‘we are as certain of being out as that the sun shall rise to-morrow.’ I was struck by something like a groan, which came from the very heart of the mother of the family. They had had many trials: there had been cradles and coffins in that home. There was not a flower, or a shrub, or a tree, but was dear to them: some of them were planted by the hands of those who were in their graves. That woman’s heart was like to break.

“In another locality there was a venerable mother who had gone to the place when it was a wilderness, but who, with her husband, had turned it into an Eden. Her husband had died there. Her son was now the minister. This venerable woman was above eighty years of age. Yes, and I never felt more disposed to give up my work than in that house. I could contemplate the children being driven from their home; but when I looked on that venerable widow and mother with the snows and sorrows of eighty years upon her head, and saw her anxiety about two things—namely, that Lord Aberdeen should bring in a bill to settle the question; but her anxiety, at the same time, that if Lord Aberdeen did not bring in a satisfactory measure, her son should do his duty, I could not but feel that it was something like a cruel work to tear out such a venerable tree—to tear her away from the house that was dearest to her on earth.”

\* “British Quarterly Review,” CVIII., p. 336.



But Mr. Guthrie never doubted that the country ministers would be upheld and strengthened. "Talk of pity! The few men who have deserted us need it—degraded in the world's eye, and, what is worse, degraded in their own; but, sir, there needs no pity for the man who, six weeks after this, shall, with his wife and children, go forth from the manse to the humble cottage. A clear conscience will shed an everlasting sunshine upon that family, giving zest to the plainest fare and to the humblest board." "I have had occasion to enter many of the cottages where our ministers are now living," was his testimony after the day of trial had come and gone, "and I say, as an honest man, that there never was a greater calumny than to allege that any of these men regret the step they have taken; but, let me tell you, that, contented and quiet, and happy as they are in their privations, there are many of them subsisting, with their families, on *one-third of their former incomes.*"

The situation of these men, thus difficult enough in itself, was soon complicated in the case of not a few by opposition from without. The Free Church was hardly launched and afloat in the open sea, when it became plain her course was neither to be a smooth nor an interrupted one. Nor did this take Mr. Guthrie by surprise: "I see," he said at a meeting, held several weeks before the Disruption—"I see great difficulties are before us—especially during the next two years—years of suffering and privation, and persecution within our land, such as have not been seen in Scotland for a century



gone by ; and, with such a sea running ahead of us, we want no man on board but will be able, at least willing, to pull an oar ; we want no pig-iron to sink us."

It was one of the sorest hardships to which the Puritans were subjected in the reign of Charles II., that the Nonconforming ministers were forbidden to come within five miles of their former congregations. In Scotland, in this nineteenth century, a policy of much the same kind was attempted in certain districts towards the Free Church. Endeavours were made by certain land-owners in these localities to stamp out what they regarded as an obnoxious sect. Attempting to make the rights of property overbear the rights of conscience, all offers to purchase sites at their market price, for either churches or manses were, on certain estates, peremptorily refused. "I have heard," said Mr. Guthrie, "of its being said on the morning of battle, 'Pick out, and bring down the officers.' The very same policy has been attempted here—bring down the minister ; 'Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered.' The object is to crush the minister ; not for the sake of injuring him—God forbid that I should say that—but to compel him to leave the district, that thus the flock of the Free Church may be scattered."

This was tantamount to making the existence of Free Church congregations impossible on the lands of these proprietors ; and when it is remembered that, as in the case of some of them, their estates embraced a whole county, or a large portion of a county, the real extent of the



grievance becomes manifest. No wonder that this roused Mr. Guthrie's indignation. No man denounced such conduct in more unmeasured terms, nor was any name more obnoxious, consequently, in certain high quarters than his.

The harsh deeds done on the one side, and the indignant words called forth from the other, are an old story now, which one would desire rather to bury than recall. Nevertheless, they are matters of history, and formed the subject of a Parliamentary investigation, in which Mr. Guthrie appeared as an important witness. We have a special reason, moreover, for referring to the refusal of sites for Free churches and manse in the present chapter : the zeal which Mr. Guthrie brought to his Manse Fund Mission was in no small degree inspired by the combined grief and indignation which the sufferings of his brethren excited in his breast.

One case of special hardship was that of Canobie, a parish in Dumfriesshire, where the Free Church congregation numbered about five hundred persons. The noble owner of the entire parish refusing to permit the erection of any place of worship, the people had no resource but to meet on the Lord's day in the open air. Accordingly, by permission of a tenant farmer, they erected a movable tent for the minister on a moorland spot where gipsies were in the habit unmolested of fixing their camp. The landlord thereupon checkmated this evasion of his will by procuring an interdict from the Court of Session, and the congregation had nothing for it but to worship God *on the high road* throughout the winter of 1843-44.



The General Assembly of the Free Church felt keenly for these people in their trying circumstances; and, to encourage them amid their hardships, sent down some of the most eminent ministers to preach to them, for at the time they had no ordained pastor. Mr. Guthrie was one of these deputies; and here is what he saw—

“LANGHOLM, 4th February, 1844.

“Well wrapped up, I drove out yesterday morning to Canobie—the hills white with snow—the roads covered, ankle-deep in many places, with slush—the wind high and cold—thick rain lashing on, and the Esk, by our side all the way, roaring in the snow flood between bank and brae. We passed Johnnie Armstrong’s Tower, yet strong even in its ruins; and, after a drive of four miles, a turn of the road brought me in view of a sight which was overpowering, and would have brought the salt tears into the eyes of any man of common humanity. There, under the naked branches of some spreading oak-trees, at a point where a country road joined the turnpike, stood a tent, around or rather in front of which were gathered a large group of muffled men and women, with some little children—a few sitting, most of them standing—and some venerable widows cowering under the scanty shelter of an umbrella. On all sides, each road was adding a stream of plaided men and muffled women to the group, till the congregation had increased to between five and six hundred, gathered on the very road, and waiting my forthcoming from a mean inn where I found shelter till the hour of worship had come.

“During the psalm-singing and first prayer, I was in the tent; but, finding that I would be uncomfortably confined, I took up my position on a chair in front, having my hat on my head, my Codrington close-buttoned up to my throat, and a pair of bands, which were wet enough with rain ere the service was over. The rain lashed on heavily during the latter part of the sermon, but none budged; and when my hat was off, during the last prayer, some man kindly extended an umbrella over my head. I was so interested, and so were the people, that our forenoon service continued for about two hours. At the close, I felt so much for the people—it was such a sad sight to see old men and women, some children, and one or two



people, pale and sickly, and apparently near the grave, all wet and benumbed with the keen wind and cold rain—that I proposed to have no afternoon service; but this met with universal dissent, and one and all declared that if I would hold on they would stay on the road to midnight. So we met again at three o'clock, and it poured on, almost without intermission, during the whole service; and that over, shaken cordially by many a hand, I got into the gig, and drove here in time for an evening service, followed, through rain in heaven and the wet snow on the roads, by a number of the people. I hope that the Lord will bless the word, and, with spiritual grace, make up to the people for their bodily sufferings." (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

The Rev. Peter Hope\* had charge of the congregation at Canobie at the time of Mr. Guthrie's visit. He has favoured us with the following narrative:—

"When Mr. Guthrie arrived, some hundreds of people had already assembled, and were standing in the drenching rain, while others were seen approaching by the three roads which converged at that point. We went into the little wayside inn which stood near, and waited a few minutes till the hour for beginning the services. The window commanded a full view of the scene, and I tried in vain to get Mr. Guthrie to sit quietly to warm himself at the fire. He was constantly starting up, gazing eagerly at the gathering crowd on the wet and miry road, striding up and down the room, and uttering exclamations of pity and horror.

"When the service began, he went at first into the preaching tent, but finding himself cramped and hampered by being so shut in, and also, as he afterwards confessed, feeling a strong desire to be nearer the people, and to share their discomforts, he speedily stepped down, and stood beside them on the road, exposed like themselves to all the inclemency of that day. I need not speak of the sermon. It was a simple exhibition and powerful enforcement of Gospel truth, but without the slightest reference to the treatment which the congregation were receiving from the lord of the soil. While many were eager to press his hand, his eye was attracted by various

\* Now Secretary to the Colonial and Continental Committees of the Free Church.



individuals—an aged widow, young children dripping wet—and a pale, sickly-looking man, of whom he remarked to me, 'This is enough to bring that man to the grave.'

"Returning to Langholm, Mr. Guthrie preached a third sermon to a crowded congregation in the Secession Church. In the evening we had much interesting conversation. But I noticed that at one stage he was unusually silent for a few minutes with his elbow on the table, and his brow on his hand. Suddenly he lifted his head and exclaimed, '*I must see that moss,*'—and added after a moment's pause—'*to complete the picture.*' He had been painting a mental picture, and there was lacking the barren bit of moorland from which the Canobie congregation had been driven by interdict. I said that I would drive him down next day, to which he at once assented.

"On Monday the weather had greatly improved, and he was in high enjoyment. I remember well that when we left the road by the river-side, and made our way towards the higher and more open ground, he said, 'I wonder we don't hear the lark.' Then a moment after, and with great animation, 'There it is—happy creature, no care, no pain, no sorrow, no sin; happy creature, Sir!' But his mood speedily changed when we came to the piece of bare worthless moor, an open and barren spot where wandering tinkers and gipsies encamped at pleasure, from which the canvas tent in which the Free Church congregation had worshipped for a few sabbaths was driven by the Duke's interdict. Mr. Guthrie gazed at the spot with strong emotion, strode over it again and again, and turning to have another look as we left it, and pointing with his finger, exclaimed, 'That, Sir, is the dearest bit of land on all the Buccleuch property.'"

The persecutions then endured at Canobie, and elsewhere in similar circumstances, were not suffered in vain. "Such persecution," said Mr. Guthrie, "blows the affections of the people into a brighter flame. It is with persecution (if it be not strong enough to succeed) as it is with a bitter wind. When you have good officers, a good crew, and a good ship, it helps you on your course. It has been so with us. Our enemies intended it for evil; God has turned it into good."



On the 10th of July, 1845, the subject was first brought before Parliament by the Marquis of Breadalbane. That nobleman, the only member of the House of Lords who at that time belonged to the Free Church, presented a petition from the General Assembly craving legislative action. This suggestion (approved of on that occasion by Lord Campbell, a consistent opponent of the Free Church) was carried into effect when, on May 19th, 1846, the Right Honourable Fox Maule introduced a bill into the House of Commons to compel proprietors to grant sites to the members of any "Christian denomination." In the course of his temperate and powerful speech, Mr. Maule quoted the following opinion of Merle d'Aubigné, the Historian of the Reformation:—"The refusal of sites for the Free Church is perhaps the only painful impression that I shall carry away with me from Scotland. In it I see that which I could not observe in the most despotic country of the Continent. It does not accord with the national character of Scotland. To a stranger, it is an inconsistency which I cannot reconcile, and in the whole matter I consider the honour of Scotland to be involved." The bill was supported by five hundred petitions, signed by sixty thousand people, but was ultimately withdrawn. The discussion it elicited was not without its effect, however; its mover announcing, when he withdrew it, that two noble proprietors had given way while the bill was before the House.

In 1847 the subject was again brought up, but in a



different form. By this time several of the other site-refusers had yielded. In thirty-five localities, however, sites were still refused to congregations numbering in all about sixteen thousand people. The Honourable E. P. Bouverie moved for a Select Committee to "inquire whether, and in what parts of Scotland, and under what circumstances, large numbers of her Majesty's subjects have been deprived of the means of religious worship by the refusal of certain proprietors to grant them sites for the erection of churches." This motion, supported by the Whig government (which, under Lord John Russell, had come into office since the subject was last before the House), was carried on a division. Mr. Guthrie gave evidence before the Committee at great length, his chief interrogator being Sir James Graham, who, though strongly condemning the conduct of the site-refusers, had opposed the motion for inquiry.

"LONDON, 30th March, 1847.

"I cannot tell you all about our examination before the Committee. We were all the better of Speirs, and Hope, and Makellar, and Crawford having gone before us: we were thereby prepared for the navigation. Nobody could believe Graham to be else than an Old Bailey counsel, whose object is to browbeat and entrap. He puts words in your mouth you never used, and assumes that you have granted what you deny. He is a gentlemanly fellow withal—a handsome fellow; smiles on you most fascinatingly, even when he intends to take you in; and when he would browbeat you, looks daggers with his great black eyes. I have not enjoyed anything so much for a long time as I did the sparring with Sir James. It was by all the world as I have felt when playing a game at draughts with a well-matched opponent. No doubt I was very well pleased, after two hours of it, to come off, for I felt conscious I marched off the field with



flying colours. Maitland, who was present, though not a member of the Committee, said, on coming out, that Graham had found me an *ugly customer*. I was not a little anxious that I might give the enemy no advantage, and have to give God the glory, that, so far as we see, they got none.\*

"I forgot to mention that, on Saturday, I met with Lord Ashley and the Hon. Mr. Cowper, and, with Mr. Maule, accompanied them to visit a school in Westminster." (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

Sir James Graham, in his examination, seems to have had two objects in view; first, to make it appear that Mr. Guthrie on his visit to Canobie had employed his well-known power of exciting feeling to rouse the people against the nobleman who had conceived it his duty to refuse a site; and second, to bring out that the power which Mr. Guthrie claimed for the Free Church he would deny to other sects. Whether Sir James succeeded in either of these endeavours, may be judged from the following queries and answers:—

1146. *Sir James Graham.*—"May I ask whether your own feeling was not that some oppression had been exercised towards these people?"

*Rev. Thomas Guthrie.*—"Certainly, I felt that the people were in most grievous circumstances, being necessitated to meet on the turnpike-road; and not only I, but I may mention in addition that the person who drove me in the gig from Langholm to Canobie, when we came in sight of that congregation standing in the open air upon such a day, and in such a place, burst into tears, and asked me, 'Was there ever sight seen like that?'"

1147. "You have mentioned that oppression makes a wise

\* In a letter to Miss G. Hay, dated 29th July, 1847, Mr. Guthrie says, in reference to Dr. Chalmers's evidence before this Committee, "Hugh Miller tells me that he considers it the finest specimen of evidence on record, equalled by none but that of Benjamin Franklin given before the House of Commons previous to the American Revolution."



man mad : the feelings of the driver might be one thing ; but you, a minister of the Gospel, would be very considerably excited by seeing what you have described, you thinking it an act of oppression upon the people ?

"Deep feeling would be excited. If you mean by 'excitement' that I was ready to break forth into unsuitable expressions, I say certainly not. I felt, when I saw it, as if I could not preach—I was so overpowered by the sight. To see my fellow-creatures—honest, respectable, religious people—worshipping the God of their fathers upon the turnpike-road was enough to melt any man's heart.

1150. "Did you control your feelings altogether, even in the sacred ordinances which you administered on that occasion ?

"I can say, with as full sincerity as ever I spoke a word in all my life, that most entirely I controlled them on that occasion ; and, since you ask me what were my feelings, I will add that I felt the deepest regret that a nobleman so kind and generous as the Duke of Buccleuch should have been led to put himself in a position, as I thought, injurious to his own standing in the country. I cannot say it was anger, but sorrow and regret more than any other feeling.

1151. "Did you restrain all expression of that feeling, directly or indirectly, in the sacred ordinances which you dispensed ?

"Yes, most certainly.

1152. "Did you not at all allude to the circumstances under which that congregation was assembled, and which were so peculiar ?

"To the best of my recollection, I made no peculiar allusion to the circumstances of the congregation. I may have prayed for people under trials ; but to the best of my recollection I made no particular allusion ; for I resolved that if I could ever restrain myself, I was to do it then.

1153. "Do you recollect what the subject of your discourse was ?

"No, I really do not. Allow me to say that I am unfortunate enough to have a short memory for texts, and often forget the subjects of my discourses in a short time after.

1154. "That was a memorable occasion, as described in your letter ;\* so memorable as not to have been forgotten easily. Do you still say that you have no recollection of

\* Mr. Guthrie had read to the Committee the letter of 4th February, 1844, which we have quoted.



the subject-matter of your discourse to that congregation under circumstances so peculiar and not to be forgotten?

"Most entirely, and for this reason,—I went there resolved to preach the Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel. I went there with the feeling that if I had a discourse that might have appeared to refer to the Duke of Buccleuch, or to the circumstances of those people, I would have rejected it on that very account.

1155. "Without reference to the Duke of Buccleuch, was it not quite possible, and even natural, to have referred to people, without any fault of their own, labouring under oppression and wrong?

"I would not have done it, because I might have been misrepresented or misunderstood.

1156. "You say you have forgotten what your sermon was?

"Most entirely. I have not the most remote recollection of it.

1157. "In your preachings you make a more lively impression upon those who hear you; and it is possible that those who heard you may recollect more distinctly what the subject of that discourse was?

"Very likely. I may explain, as you seem to be surprised, so forgetful am I of that, that I have twice in one twelvemonth preached from the same text, and never known it till I was told it by the people.

\* \* \* \* \*

1259. "You claiming sites for the Free Church upon the great and general principle of toleration, are you of opinion that that toleration ought to extend, and would extend, if pushed to its legitimate consequences, to the granting of sites for Roman Catholic chapels?

"I would grant a site to a Mahomedan—to any man who desired to worship God according to his conscience.

1263. "Jew or Mahomedan?

"Yes.

1264. *Mr. G. W. Hope*.—"Or idolater?

"Yes; I have no right to stand between a man and his God, whatever that God may be.

1266. *Mr. Fox Maule*.—"It would not at all deter them from doing their best, and taking every means in their power to convert the Jew, Mahomedan, or Idolater?

"Certainly not. I think it would be one way of preventing that conversion to refuse them."



The Committee reported on the 5th of July, 1847. The report, which was unanimous, concludes with these words:—"The compulsion to worship in the open air without a church is a grievous hardship inflicted on innocent parties; and while your Committee abstain from judging the motives which have led either to the Secession, or the refusal of sites, they hope that every just ground of complaint may be speedily removed by the voluntary act of those whose property gives them the means of redressing a grievance, and of thereby conciliating the goodwill of a large body of their countrymen."

For a considerable time, however, the grievance in various places remained unredressed. In the following year, for example, while Mr. Guthrie was at Ballater in Aberdeenshire, laid aside from work, the Free Church congregation there, to whom a site was still denied, had to meet at a distance from the village in a low thatched shed on a bare hillside. "We are still worshipping in the sheep-cot here," he wrote from Ballater on 22nd July, 1848. "I am sure the Continent and Ireland might teach these site-refusers that there are worse subjects of controversy than the Free Kirk, and worse people to deal with than us. It would do them a world of good if they had for some four-and-twenty hours only a tasting of the cup which God is giving other nations to drink."

The site-refusing proprietors, one after another, gave way, and some of them had the magnanimity, in doing so, to confess their mistake. When it became evident



that time alone was wanted to bring the others round, Mr. Guthrie resolutely opposed any further appeal to the Legislature.

“CORSTORPHINE, 17th January, 1849.

“ . . . I went into town on Tuesday to a meeting of the Site Committee, at Mr. Hog's special request. The point was—Shall we go to Parliament and agitate the country this session on the question? There was a pretty long and keen discussion. Begg is always for keeping the pot boiling. We divided:—For continuing agitation, Candlish and Begg, 2; Against, and for a pause to leave the site-refusers time to come quietly round, Hog, Earle Monteith, Dunlop, Brown Douglas, Dr. Cunningham, and myself, 6. I am to go to no more such meetings; but it was a strong and needful case. I will not appear in Church Courts; but I told Cunningham to tell them that the time is now come when, if some of our ministers are made of such *dour* metal that their swords will not beat into ploughshares, their swords must be sheathed. We have fought long enough: let us spend the rest of our days ploughing and sowing.” (To his sister Jane.)

At length, in 1862, Dr. Guthrie was able to say, from the Moderator's chair of the General Assembly, “We have outlived persecution. Our conduct has proved that we are not the agitators, and demagogues, and disturbers of the peace, that some people were weak enough to think, and some who knew better were wicked enough to say, we would be. We have lived down these calumnies. . . . These persecutions were not very agreeable, certainly,—not very consonant to Scripture—but I am very happy to say now that they are almost all past. No doubt, I did read the other day a copy of a letter from a landed proprietor to a tenant who had given house-room to one of our evangelists, which contained this remarkable postscript, ‘Honour the king, and hate the Free



Kirk,'—but I rejoice to think that these things are at an end. The exception proves the rule; and by-and-by such parties will be numbered with those monstrous creatures, of which, happily for us, our earth contains nothing but the bones!"

The cases were, no doubt, exceptional, where the outgoing ministers were denied a spot of ground on which to build churches for their flocks, or manses for their families. The larger number of them were, within the first year, provided with churches of a more or less substantial kind (no fewer than five hundred having been run up before May, 1844); but, for country ministers, domestic privations were inevitable in the case of almost all.

"I have been a country minister myself," said Mr. Guthrie, when the day of trial was close at hand, "and I know well what country ministers will have to suffer. They have families for whom it was difficult enough to provide before, but for whom it will be ten times more difficult to provide now. They will be compelled to leave comforts to which many of them have been accustomed from their earliest years, and homes dear because of nature's beauties—for there is many a lovely manse in Scotland—but far dearer because of many a tender association." It was when the country minister returned to his distant parish from the stir of the metropolis—the excitement of a great event, in which he had been an actor, now over—that he had to face the stern realities of his

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position. That "Quitting the Manse," to which Mr. Guthrie alluded, forms the subject of a historical picture by Sir George Harvey, in the National Gallery at Edinburgh. The minister, sad but resolute, leads forth from the door of his manse an aged mother, her tottering form leaning heavily on his arm, as she descends the familiar steps. His wife, immediately behind, turns the key for the last time in the door; and by her side stands the eldest child, a girl, into whose eyes the tears have started as she sees the flowers around the porch, and thinks she will train them no more. The younger children carry their little household pets—toys and caged bird—and, when they see the grey-haired elders and saddened parishioners who cluster round the doorsteps, wonder what it all means. The cart which conveys the furniture of the manse is seen passing the old church in the distance, while a humble vehicle awaits the family at the gate. A westering sun and far-off moorland complete a picture which will tell to future generations a touching tale, and go home to many a Scottish heart.

A fancy picture, no doubt, but one founded on stern fact. "I remember," said Mr. Guthrie, "passing a manse on a moonlight night, with a minister who had left it for the cause of truth. No light shone from the house, and no smoke arose. Pointing to it in the moonlight, I said, 'Oh, my friend, it was a noble thing to leave that manse.' 'Ah! yes,' he replied, 'but for all that, it was a bitter thing. I shall never forget the night I left that house till I am laid in the grave.



When I saw my wife and children go forth in the gloaming, when I saw them for the last time leave our own door, and when in the dark I was left alone, with none but my God; and when I had to take water to quench the fire on my own hearth, and put out the candle in my own house, and turn the key against myself and my wife and my little ones, I bless God for the grace which was given me, but may He in His mercy grant that such a night I may never again see.' "

Their manses thus abandoned, many country ministers had no resource but to huddle their families into some vacant dwelling in the neighbourhood, or, transporting them to the nearest town, incur expenses they were little able to bear, as well as serious difficulty and fatigue in their discharge of pastoral duty. The whole circumstances of the case, therefore, seemed to necessitate an immediate effort to provide manses as well as churches; and it deserves to be recorded to the honour of the Disruption ministers that, though a committee was formed for inaugurating a manse fund so early as May, 1844, these men themselves unselfishly laid an arrest upon it, resolving that, until the Church's necessary machinery was all in working order, they would not allow their personal comfort to be consulted.

That year, 1844-45 (the second of the Church's existence), was signalised by the School Building Fund scheme, for which £50,000 was raised through the exertions of the Rev. Robert Macdonald (now Dr. Macdonald), and by the College Building Fund, which



realized £20,000 more. The five great missionary schemes of the Church were by this time in vigorous operation; and the Sustentation Fund, which in 1843-44 amounted to £61,000, had increased in 1844-45 to £76,000. Ere the second year of the Free Church's existence closed, her adherents had raised £697,000; one great effort more, and the external framework of the Free Church would be complete. "By building manses," said Mr. Guthrie, "you will complete our ecclesiastical machinery, and give the Free Church a permanence in the country which it would not otherwise possess. Some one, a foe to our Church, said to a friend of mine in Glasgow, 'Well, we had some hope you would all go to pieces, and be driven out to sea after the Disruption. When we saw you build churches, we had less hope; when we saw you build schools, we had less still; but when you have built your manses you will have dropped your anchor, and there will be no driving you out.'"

Accordingly, in May, 1845, it was resolved to raise a central fund for this purpose. Fifty thousand pounds at once, and one hundred thousand pounds ultimately, was the lowest sum that could be deemed adequate. To ask all this from a community whose liberality had, during the two previous years, been taxed as it had never been before, was a bold resolve, and one of which Mr. Guthrie himself almost dreaded the result. "I fear," he said, "that Mr. Macdonald has left the field something like that which two Irishmen came upon one day. 'Saw ye ever a field like this?' asked Pat.



‘nothing but a stalk here and a stalk there!’ ‘Sure,’ said the other, ‘I’ve seen one far worse; I’ve seen a field with a stalk here and no stalk there at all!’” But the men who presided over the finances of the Free Church had struck a rich and apparently inexhaustible vein of generosity, and they knew that the people who loved their ministers, and honoured them for the sacrifices they had made, would respond to this fresh appeal.

The one essential requisite for the success of the Manse Fund Scheme was a man who could work it; who, with a large and tender heart, could plead the cause with the people in such a way as to rouse their enthusiasm, and, by a winning manner in private, draw forth their generosity. That man was found in Mr. Guthrie. The choice was due to the sagacity of Dr. Chalmers. “It was no office I sought myself,” he said at Glasgow, when addressing the first public meeting on the scheme, “I would much rather have stayed at home with my own flock and my own family: I have had enough of speaking, and travelling, and fighting, and I am tired of it; and were it not that I have reason to believe that I am the last ‘big beggar-man’\* you will ever see, and were it not that the cause has all my sympathy and deepest interest, I would not have undertaken this work. I would have been happy had the Church chosen one better fitted for it than myself; but I am sure that in one

\* This expression suggested the idea of a clever caricature of Mr. Guthrie by the late Rev. Wallace Duncan, of Peebles. The stalwart “beggar-man” is represented, staff in hand, carrying the manse of the Free Church on his back.



respect no man could be better fitted, for if I have not a head, I have at least a heart for the work."

Apart, however, from his natural qualifications, there were circumstances which gave him a special preparation for this service. Not only, as we have already explained, had he witnessed something of the hardships which site-refusing entailed, but he had come into contact in various other ways with the privations his country brethren and their families were enduring. It was with pain to himself he had seen these; but, as the event proved, with no small advantage to his clients. A fire was kindled within him which would not let him rest, and it glowed in the earnest appeals he delivered all over the land.

"Some of you," he said, in the General Assembly of 1845, "may have read in the *Witness* an account of the death of Mr. Baird, the minister of Cockburnspath; a man of piety, a man of science, a man of amiable disposition, and of the kindest heart; a man dealt most unkindly by; though he would not have done a cruel or unjust thing to the meanest of God's creatures. I was asked to go and preach for a collection in aid of his manse last winter. He left one of the loveliest manses in Scotland. He might have lived in comfort in Dunbar, seven or eight miles away, but what was to become of his people? 'No,' said Mr. Baird, 'be the consequences what they may, I shall stand by my own people.'

"I went out last winter and found him in a mean cottage, consisting of two rooms, a 'but and a ben,' with a cellar-like closet below, and a garret above. Night came, and I asked where I was to sleep. He showed me a closet; the walls were damp, no fire could be put in it. I looked horrified at the place, but there was no better. 'Now,' said I to Mr. Baird, 'where are you to sleep?' 'Come,' said he, 'and I will show you.' So he climbed a sort of trap stair and got up to the garret, and there was the minister's study, with a chair, a table and a flock bed. A few inches above were the slates of the



roof, without any covering, and as white with hoar frost within as they were white with snow without. When he came down the next morning after a sleepless night, I asked him how he had been, and he told me he had never closed an eye from the cold. His very breath on the blankets was frozen as hard as the ice outside. I say that man lies in a martyr's grave."

After Mr. Guthrie had agreed to undertake the Manse Fund Mission, he resolved to visit the north of Scotland. "I was not in Sutherland," he said, "collecting money, but I was in Sutherland collecting that which made money; having gathered in that county some striking as well as some painful illustrations of the necessity that there was for such a scheme." He had for his companion on this occasion the late Rev. D. Carment, of Rosskeen.

"LAIRG, 25th June, 1845.

"I went last evening to see the tent where our people worship, and have worshipped since the Disruption. It is situated in a beautiful hollow in the mountain above the village.

"Yesterday we got to Bonar Bridge, which crosses a narrow point of the Dornoch Firth, about one o'clock. We had sent word the day before that we would preach; so we went with the Free Church minister, Gustavus Aird, off to the church. Mr. Carment first discoursed about an hour in Gaelic, and then I another hour, in English. I am making nothing of the Gaelic, and was quite ashamed the other day in Invergordon to observe that the very cows understand it, and I don't! Carment is amused with my patience in sitting for hours and hearing Gaelic—I sat at the 'Men's' meeting for four hours, and heard nothing else. I just sit and study the faces of the people, and from Carment's use now and then of a proper name, and their faces, I sometimes make a pretty shrewd guess of what he is about.

"Close by the Free Church at Crieich I saw an interesting place,—the rock under whose shadow, and the lake by whose side, the people worshipped God for more than two years, summer and winter, no less than thirty years ago. A Moderate was intruded: the people took up their bibles and left the



church empty. The Seceders had not penetrated these Highland fastnesses, nor was there any Free Church then to help them; so they met under this rock, and the 'Men' conducted their services for two years there under the open sky. Afterwards they had to meet in different parts of the parishes; but now, after thirty years of separation, the Disruption—as they call it, the *Blessed Disruption*—has brought them together again in the Free Church." (To Mrs. Guthrie.)

"TONGUE INN, 26th June, 1845.

"I intended to have entertained you with another despatch to-morrow, not supposing that I would find time to write one to-day, or rather this morning—for it is morning still, and Mr. Carment, honest man (who is standing out well and in great good spirits, and is the best of company, full of pious, pungent, and witty observations), is still in bed.

"When we came in sight of this place, Ben Loyal was singularly beautiful. I wished Miss Fanny Stoddart\* to have seen it, if she would have ventured to touch it. Spots of sunshine, breaking through the windows of the clouds, chased each other up the mountain as they hurried on to the skies. Here, a flood of golden light streamed down on the calm waters, while yonder, the sunbeams, making their way through the mist, poured a silver glory on rock and headland. I never all my days saw anything so beautiful;—it passed painting.

"I had intended to have breakfasted with the aged minister here, who, on my sending him notice of our arrival, came last night to see us. He lives with his son, who is his assistant and successor, in a bedroom in the parish school-master's house. He is seventy-five years old—very asthmatic. His son is ill of a bilious fever, and he himself has suffered so from the exposure of last night, that a boy has just come, riding through a hurricane of wind and rain, to say that Mr. McKenzie will not be able to receive me to breakfast. His family live forty miles away, about Thurso. He pays for their accommodation there £35 per year. His manse (former one, I mean) is just at hand—the finest, save Arbirlot, I have almost seen—and now the old man rents a bedroom and bed-closet in his parish at four shillings a week. His family have had possession of the manse for nearly a century, and he himself has spent several hundred pounds in improving it. The people here are all Free Church, save a few big farmers. . . .

\* A gifted member of a family with whom Dr. Guthrie was intimately acquainted.



"P.S.—I have just returned from seeing Mr. McKenzie. The way to his home is along the arm of the sea, out to the Northern Ocean. The day was fierce, with wind and rain beating hard in my face. After passing the beautiful manse which he had left, a mile or two further on I found the old man's shelter, in a mean cottage school-house under the lee of a heather hill. Before the filthy doorway there stood a broken cart and a black peat-stack, not a flower adorning it. There is a 'but and a ben,' with a small bed-closet off it. In the end with the closet the minister is sheltered.

"I had just time to learn that the livelong night he had been very ill, when I stepped into a mean apartment, which is dining-room, library, bedroom, and all; and there, beyond the bed, sat the old man, half dressed, in a high-backed black chair, over which his grey locks were falling, he himself deep-buried in the sleep of exhausted nature. I stepped up to him, but he stirred not. I stood for a while, and looked on the touching picture, thinking, oh! if I had any of the men here who are persecuting our poor Free Church, surely they would be moved by such a sight as this; then, stealing across the floor, I pushed open the closet-door, and found his son stretched on his sick-bed, all the worse from hearing through the long night, while unable to relieve them, his father's sufferings. I stayed for a minute or two with the son, who was, amid it all, thankful that he did not lie on that fever-bed a renegade,—that his conscience and his father's were at peace.

"Every daisy on the road had its cup closed; and surely, thought I, if God in this storm so protects these little flowers, He'll not desert these two faithful servants—the venerable old man and a son worthy of his sire. I confess when, on my return, I again passed the manse, and looked on its smooth lawn, and chimneys, and neat, trim walks, I felt my corruption rising." (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

Both the McKenzies of Tongue died shortly thereafter. When the announcement was made in the General Assembly, Mr. Guthrie said, "I wish to bear my humble testimony to the worth of these men—I should rather say to the worth of these martyrs for those great principles for which we abandoned our earthly all. I fancy most of the members of this House are aware that I had the pain—



the exquisite pain—and I must at the same time say the very high privilege—of seeing that noble father, and his no less noble son, witnessing under the most affecting circumstances a good and blessed confession. I shall never forget to my dying day the scene which I witnessed at Tongue.”

Mr. Guthrie returned from this visit to the north full of ardour for the prosecution of his Manse Fund scheme. Meanwhile, the whole financial arrangements, under the unflagging energy of Mr. Robert Paul, the convener, and Mr. Meldrum, the vice-convener of the scheme, had been made. Seven hundred manses were needed; the original sum aimed at for the Central Fund being £50,000 to meet present necessities and £100,000 ultimately. This Central Fund was not to supersede but to stimulate and supplement congregational effort. Each congregation was to receive from it a grant of £200; the cost of their manses over and above that sum to be raised by local exertion. Subject to exceptions in cases of particular hardship, the ministers of Highland parishes were to be the first participators; next those in the Lowland country parishes; then those in the small towns; and, lastly, those who, like Mr. Guthrie himself, lived in the large towns.

The Central Fund was to be raised from the middle and upper classes alone. “Five pounds is our lowest subscription,” said Mr. Guthrie, “but don’t run away with the idea that you are only to give £5. Dr. Chalmers said that if every household gave one penny a



week to the Free Church of Scotland, we should have funds sufficient for all our purposes; and a great many people ran away with the idea of the one penny, and never gave more! My minimum, then, is £5; and if any man asks me what is my maximum, my answer is, 'Try me, and I'll tell you!'"

Subscribers were to have the option of paying by instalments, extending over five years. Mr. Guthrie attached great importance to this provision, and felt no delicacy in illustrating its advantages by his own case. He had (we may explain), in common with many of his brethren in Edinburgh and Glasgow, subscribed £100 to the Manse Fund. "It's no secret," he said in Glasgow, "that I am not rich, save in children; and, therefore, if any man had asked me, 'Mr. Guthrie, will you give £100, which you must pay down to-night?' he might as well have asked, 'Mr. Guthrie, will you fly?' But it was quite another thing if a man came to me and said, 'Mr. Guthrie, will you subscribe £100, and I will give you five years to pay it in?' That altered the case altogether. After I had put down my name for the £100, I would just have to go home and consult with my wife how the money was to be paid—what luxury must be cut off. I would just advise you to get into this excellent scrape, and you will find a way to get out of it."

He broke ground on 9th July, 1845, in Glasgow. "I think," he said, "I showed no little common sense in going to Glasgow first; I understand very little of music, but I understand enough to know that if you begin



to sing in a low key you cannot easily get up to a higher one; and it is with money as with music, if you begin on a low key, you cannot get up without great difficulty." So encouraging was the reception he met with in the capital of the West, that he was easily persuaded by several leading Free Churchmen there (among whom we find Mr. Guthrie specially mentioned Professor Rainy, M.D.), to aim at £100,000 instead of £50,000, as originally proposed. The sum of £10,000, subscribed in the first three days, seemed amply to warrant this resolution. As he told the audience at the meeting in the City Hall, "I have spent three of the happiest days I ever spent in my life, in this city. I have gone from house to house, and from counting-room to counting-room, and I have found no cold looks, but genuine kindness. I have been often told, 'Oh, Mr. Guthrie, there is no use for making a speech. We are quite prepared for you, sir; where's your book?' On Monday evening I wrote to Edinburgh, and next day I had a letter in which it was stated that they were all guessing at the sum I had got on Monday, and what amount do you think they guessed I had got? Why, they made it £1,500. Now the whole sum collected on Monday, during one half-hour's work, was not £1,500, but the first single sum obtained was £1,500. I venture to say you know from whom that came—William Campbell of Tilliechewan."

Between the 9th day of July, 1845, when, in Glasgow, he addressed the first public meeting, and the first day



of June, 1846, when he announced the result to the General Assembly, at Edinburgh, he must have travelled many thousands of miles. He visited thirteen synods, fifty-eight presbyteries, and several hundreds of separate congregations; in many cases preaching the gospel, always making a fervent appeal of an hour or more for his manse scheme. In the more important places he spent the following day in making personal visits, subscription-book in hand, to parties judged likely to subscribe.

"I commend Mr. Guthrie to you," said Mr. Fox Maule, at a Manse Fund meeting, "as one who, having left his family for long seasons together, has wandered over the greater part of Scotland, and talked as much as would have killed any ordinary man. He has, perhaps, subscribed more to this scheme than all of us put together." When one considers how this work was continued by him day after day, week after week, and month after month, it may be imagined how severe the strain on his nervous system it involved—a strain seriously increased during three months of that period by the knowledge that scarlet fever had invaded his home, prostrating seven children, one after another. That year's effort left effects on his frame which he carried to his grave.

The speeches which Mr. Guthrie delivered during these twelve months would, of themselves, fill a volume; and although the main burden of them all was necessarily similar, one is struck in reading them by his versatility,



in adapting his remarks, pathetic or humorous, to the locality, the time, and the class he addressed.

After his success in Glasgow, Mr. Guthrie proceeded to the surrounding towns and country districts. He reported progress on 26th August, 1845, to a second meeting of the General Assembly held that year at Inverness.

Just before going there, he had received a letter from a member of his congregation, who sought his counsel in the following circumstances. She was the only member of her family (which occupied an influential position in a southern county) who belonged to the Free Church. While living in her own house in Edinburgh, this lady could act an independent part; but being now on a lengthened visit in the country to her nearest relatives, with no Free Church within a distance of convenient access, she was in difficulty how to act on the Lord's day. Would she compromise her principles by appearing in the family pew at the parish church?

To estimate aright Mr. Guthrie's reply, the reader must bear in mind that at that date (two years after the Disruption) party-feeling still ran very high in Scotland.

“EDINBURGH, 13th August, 1845.

“I very sincerely sympathize with you in your present delicate position. You know well that I am no bigot, and in these times we should do all we can to heal the wounds of controversy, and draw all sound-hearted men of all Evangelical denominations together; for, unless I mistake entirely the signs of the times, we are driving on one of two positions—the endowment of all (error as well as Divine truth), or the endowment of none; and most fervently do I hope and pray that the Lord's people in the Established Churches both of England and Scotland may get grace to say we will take no



share in a system, lend no countenance whatever to a system, which, in effect, puts Antichrist on the same level with our Divine Lord Jesus Christ.

"I would do all I could with a clear conscience, therefore, to pour oil on the troubled waters of strife among good people; to prove that I did not deny other men's Christianity, because they in all things walked not with me; nay, even while I think that the Scottish Establishment has greatly failed in her duty to the Head of the Church, greatly sinned in the matter of the past controversy, and that it is the duty of Christ's people who are within her to come out of her—still, I don't on that account deny to her the title of a Church of Christ; and I would not, therefore, refuse in ordinary circumstances to join in worship with her. We must, however, take care that our good is not evil spoken of. In present circumstances, *my* appearance within her walls would be made a bad use of; it would be turned against that cause for which we risked and left so much, and occasion would be taken to say (as is much tried) that there was never occasion for our going forth, and that, in fact, there is no difference between us.

"It does not, however, follow that others, in other circumstances, are bound down by the same difficulties. What I would advise only is, that in case you go to worship with the Established Church, you should let it be distinctly known to both parties, in any way you judge best, that you go, not because you are not a decided adherent of the Free Church, but on grounds of Christian Catholicism. May the Lord direct you in this and all other matters, and give you daily supplies of peace and grace, so that others seeing your light may be led to glorify God, and you yourself may be built up in every Christian grace.

"I am just about to set off for the north, else I had filled two sheets; and would have enjoyed to hold on thus talking to you. The Lord, in the matter of the manse, is blessing us amazingly. I have been working four weeks or so in the west; save in Dunoon and Rothesay, my labours have been confined to the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, and from that Synod alone I will report at least £85,000 to the Inverness Assembly. I send you a copy of a speech. May the Lord, my dear friend, most richly bless you and all dear to you. With very great affection and esteem, I commend you to Him."

From the spirit of this letter, it is manifest that while Mr. Guthrie, by his exertions to raise the Manse Fund,



was then doing his very best to build up his own Church and strengthen her position in the land, he had no sympathy with the attitude assumed by some of his brethren towards the Church which they and he had alike quitted. His sentiments on this point come out still more unmistakably in another letter written a few months after the date of the above, whilst still in the thick of his Manse Fund work, and breathing, as may be supposed, a purely Free Church atmosphere. The proposal to form an Evangelical Alliance having been started, its programme was taken exception to by certain ministers of the Free Church because it was proposed to include ministers of the Scottish Establishment; and a small but pugnacious minority of Mr. Guthrie's brethren attempted to put the Free Church into the odious position of standing aloof from the proposed Alliance on this ground.

“EDINBURGH, 26th February, 1846.

“I am taken up with our present awkward position as to Evangelical union with other churches. Next week we are to have a conference on this subject, and for the first time since I have begun my Manse scheme I have called a halt, that I might attend that conference and protest against the dangerous, fatal, and, in my opinion, as impolitic as unchristian position into which some of our fierce and narrow-minded men would drive us. I had a talk with Chalmers about it at Kirkliston, and with Candlish to-day.

“First: I protest against having my Christian liberty interfered with by ———, and such like, or by any Church Court whatever in this matter. Secondly: I protest *in toto* against the uncatholic sentiments of these men, even as to the Residuaries.\* Thirdly: I protest against the rule that I must withdraw myself from Christian Communion with all Christendom (save the

\* The ministers of the Established Church.



ministers and members of my own Church) because I cannot get all Christendom to adopt my views of the Residuaries. The question is not, will you *invite* the Residuaries? but, will you withdraw from holding brotherly communion with all Christendom because they will not agree at your request to *exclude* the Residuaries?

"I have been warning my friends against committing themselves to a false and uncatholic position. The circumstances of the first Seceders I have held up to them as an awful warning. These good men rashly declared that the Established Church was little better than 'a synagogue of Satan.' They refused to admit Whitesfield into their pulpits because he refused to agree to their demand that he should not enter the pulpit of an Established Church. Well, the revivals of Kilsyth, &c., took place. They were driven to choose one of these two alternatives: either admit they were wrong in denouncing the Establishment as a synagogue of Satan, or declare these revivals not to be manifestations of the Spirit, but delusions of the devil. Pride, and prejudice, and passion prevailed. They chose the latter, and grievously sinned. Some of our men are about to run the same course.

"If these principles are to be adopted, then we shall shrivel into our own shell, and become a mere narrow-minded, despicable sect, having flung away advantages of no common kind, and abandoned, I would say, the leadership of Evangelism in this and other lands. It is curious that it is the men in general who have sacrificed nothing for the Free Church, as well as those who hesitated about coming out, who are the loudest in their outcry."

When Mr. Guthrie reached Inverness, he announced to the General Assembly which met there in August, 1845, that from the western districts of Scotland alone he had obtained subscriptions for the Manse Fund to the amount of £37,650. During the following months of September, October, November, and December, he visited the Synods of Moray, Ross, Aberdeen, Perth, and Angus. Reaching Edinburgh at length, he addressed, on 11th December, 1845, an enthusiastic audience of 4,000 people in the





vast low-roofed hall at Canonmills, where the first Free Church Assembly had met :—

“ I have no fear for the ultimate result of our movement,” he said. “ I saw three hundred ministers within these walls sign away their earthly all, and even then I did not believe that God would desert His own servants. I felt then, as I do now, that, beg who may, under God, the hand that signed that Deed of Demission never will be held out for the world’s cold charity, and that to the sons and daughters of these men God will be a Father.

“ I call upon the people of Edinburgh to do their duty to these noble men and to this noble cause. I have been blamed for being too urgent in this matter. It may be ; but let those who say this, remember where I have stood ; let them remember what I have seen ; I would not envy the man who, having had the same opportunities of being acquainted with the facts, would not be as urgent and as importunate. Had they entered, as I have done, the Highland hut—had they stood on its clay floor, and under its black rafters, and seen the man of God living in a mere hovel—had they heard the trembling voice of the father tell that the last time he had seen his children they did not know him, he had been so long away from them—had they seen the father who told me his last work overnight was to stop up the openings through which the wild winds blew upon the couch of his dying child—had they seen those things, they would not have blamed me for being too importunate.

“ Sir, I could stand the beating of the tempest of oppression, did it beat only on my own head ; but to see the hectic flush on a child’s cheek—to see the withering of a sore consumption—to carry to the grave the mother of a man’s own children—to come back from the churchyard to hush the wail of a motherless infant, crying for a mother who was no longer on earth—these are trying afflictions, and that is what some of our homeless and houseless ministers have had to bear. May that right hand wither when I desert my brethren ! ”

At the close of the meeting, Mr. Guthrie intimated that nearly £80,000 of the £100,000 aimed at had been subscribed. No wonder that such a result, in so short a time, excited much surprise and much thanksgiving.



"On the Sunday immediately preceding the great Manse Meeting at Canonmills," writes Hugh Miller, in the *Witness* of 24th December, 1845, "there sat in Mr. Guthrie's church in Edinburgh, in the forefront of the gallery, immediately opposite the pulpit, a pale, spare little man, marked chiefly by a quick, watchful eye, who seemed very attentive to the discourse, and who, judging from appearances, must have been particularly struck by at least one of the announcements made by the preacher. He had been leaning slightly backwards, until nearly the close of the service, in the easy attitude of a person accustomed to listen with small effort; but only a few minutes ere the congregation broke up, the preacher succeeded, it was evident, in making a great impression on the little man. He sat bolt upright, looked sharply and suddenly forward, with something as like a stare as eyes so very watchful, and lips so compressed and so acutely defined, could be at all expected to express, and then dropping slowly into his former position, he seemed to be pondering over in his own mind the statement which had so roused him. It was simply to the effect that the preacher had already succeeded in procuring, in various parts of Scotland, subscriptions to his Manse scheme to the amount of nearly eighty thousand pounds; and that, though not sure what his own congregation would do for it, he was yet inclined to hope the best, partly from the circumstance that he had found time to call on just seven of them, and that the joint contributions of the seven amounted to thirteen hundred pounds.

"The little spare man had detected in the statement a startling and a yet most solid theology, which, it was obvious, he could perfectly understand. He had met, too, in the course of the day, with several other things of a kind suited to impress him. In the morning he had attended service in the High Church—the *bonâ fide* High Church, for Dr. Gordon had brought only the congregation with him and not the building—and he had found it very cold and very empty; whereas, in forcing his way into Free St. John's, he had been almost squeezed flat in the lobby by a besieging crowd of brawny Scotchmen, and he had found every passage and corner densely occupied within. The little spare man was Lord John Russell, the leader of the Whigs."

Through the months of winter and early spring, Mr. Guthrie continued his "begging tour," visiting the



Synods of Fife, Lothian, Merse and Teviotdale, Dumfries, and Galloway. If Madame de Staël's definition of happiness—"the active prosecution of an enterprise in which one finds himself making constant progress"—be well founded, Mr. Guthrie had very much to make him happy; while the anxiety and fatigue of that exciting year were alleviated by the friendships he formed in every class of society, and in every corner of his native land; for he found a welcome alike in the cottages which gave a temporary shelter to his country brethren, and under the gilded ceilings of Taymouth.

His work, too, was greatly lightened by the readiness with which the contributions—alike the maximum of £5,000 from Lord Breadalbane and the minimum of £5 from a working-man—were universally given. We remember him telling, among many other incidents of his tour, how often his fears were disappointed and his hopes exceeded in regard to subscribers. Dining one evening at Monboddie House, in Kincardineshire, with the late excellent Captain Burnett, previous to his addressing the Free Church congregation of which his gallant host was an elder, Mr. Guthrie was somewhat disconcerted by the evident flurry and annoyance into which Captain Burnett was thrown by the disappearance of a pair of spectacles. "Too bad! Too bad!" he exclaimed more than once, "those glasses cost me fourteen shillings last year in London, and now the money's gone!" "This don't look well for my subscription-book to-night, was my mental reflection," added Mr. Guthrie



in telling the story ;—" if the loss of a pair of spectacles be counted so serious, how am I to look for £50 ? But what was my surprise and delight when Captain Burnett headed the list, after my speech, with a subscription of £200 to the Manse Fund ! "

In public, Mr. Guthrie bore testimony to the readiness with which subscriptions were given :—" I could bring forward instances," he said, " in which I have actually restrained people from subscribing. In fact, wherever I went, I found I was no beggar at all. Ours were the generous grapes, and not the husks to which it is necessary to apply the *screw*. So far from pressing, I have often been struck with the way in which many a one put down his subscription. When my heart was full and I was ready to express my thanks, many and many a time have I been answered, ' You have not to thank us, Mr. Guthrie ; but we have to thank you for giving us the opportunity to subscribe. ' "

At length his work was done ; and when the General Assembly met at Edinburgh, he had the high satisfaction, on 1st June, 1846, of announcing as the result of his year's labour that ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY POUNDS had been subscribed.\*

" The amount is larger than I ever expected," said Mr.

\* The total number of subscribers being 6,610, the average subscription was thus £19 ; " which," as he himself said, " brings out very satisfactorily the fact that the Free Church, while she rejoices in having a host of the humbler classes in her communion, also counts among her devoted adherents a large portion of the middle classes of the people."



Guthrie. "When I undertook this scheme last year, it was with no small fear and trembling that I went forth. I did not say it then, because I knew I would do my cause no service by a state of terror or alarm. But I say it now. Last year at this time, with the exception of a small sum of money, we had no Manse Fund at all. When I went first to Glasgow, Dr. Buchanan will remember he met me at the railway-station, and saw me with nothing but a flower in my buttonhole! But I knew I had a good cause,—I knew I had good clients,—and I knew that, having a good cause, God would bless me in this enterprise. I felt confident that if I could only get the ears of the people, I should not fail of success. I was much disposed to say with the poet Pope, when on one occasion he said he would address a field of corn. The people wondered what he would say; when Mr. Pope, taking off his hat, and bowing to the nodding corn, said, 'Gentlemen, give us your ears, and we shall never want bread.' In like manner, I was satisfied, if I could but get the ears of the Free Church people of Scotland, we should not want manses any more than bread.

"Were I not most thankful, I would be the most unthankful of men. I have personal cause of thankfulness, for I have gone out and come in in safety from all my journeyings. I have also domestic cause for thankfulness. A sword was brandished over my house for months; and many a time when I went away, it was with the fear that I would have another house to come to on my return. But God, in His great and undeserved mercy, put away that sword, and delivered mine from a disease that has ravaged many a dwelling.

"An artilleryman at Waterloo was asked what he had seen. He replied that he saw nothing but smoke. I have seen, however, a great deal more than smoke. The artilleryman was next asked what he had been doing. He replied, that he had 'just blazed away at his own gun.' Now I have been like the artilleryman, blazing away at my own gun; and if I have failed to attend to many matters brought before me during the last ten months, and neglected many letters sent me by my brethren, I hope for their pardon.

"I once thought—seeing that I have made a fortune of £116,000 in twelve months—of getting a ticket posted, with the words 'Retired from Business' printed on it in large black letters! I have now only one request to make of the Church, and that is, that they would let me alone!"

The raising of the Manse Fund was Mr. Guthrie's



greatest service to the Free Church, and many a sweet dwelling by seashore and in highland glen will long remain his monument. In the course of his journeyings in after-years, even in the Ultima Thule of Shetland, he had the unique satisfaction of seeing substantial dwellings he had helped to rear, surrounded by their gardens and greenery, and occupied by men of God and their families whose comfort he had been honoured to promote; and we can testify to the loving welcome he received from the peaceful groups at these manse fire-sides. The following extract from a letter of a highland minister gone to his rest presents a sample of many similar effusions of grateful hearts:—

“FREE CHURCH MANSE,

“BONAR BRIDGE, SUTHERLANDSHIRE, 3rd December, 1846.

“DEAR MR. GUTHRIE,— . . . You certainly ought to be amongst the first, *if not the very first*, to hear from a new Free Church manse the moment it is occupied by a living, speaking, grateful, mortal man. It is now some days since I came here from my endeared wee thatched house on the banks of the Sutherland Kyle. Though the change was to a comfortable mansion in a very pretty situation on the wooded banks of the river, I left the tiniest manse in the Free Church not without regret. There I was a free man, breathing the free air, amid a free and attached people, pitying the tenant of my former beautiful manse and garden,—scenes of much happiness and deep sorrow to me.

“Your portrait, presented to me by a friend in Edinburgh, has already its niche in this house. We don’t mean to make you a tutelary divinity—a domestic ‘lar’—but sure I am your name ought to be, and will be, familiar at our firesides as a household word. To how many scattered and spoiled groups you have been the honoured, favoured instrument of giving a comfortable and permanent resting-place!

“With affectionate respect,

“Yours very faithfully,

“H. ALLAN.”



The gratitude of Mr. Guthrie's brethren ere long took a practical shape. They knew that the man who had raised so many mansees for others, had not, as a town minister, any manse of his own; and when, in 1848, his health gave way, a movement was set on foot to provide him with a dwelling-house, to be raised by the contributions of ministers of the Free Church. Before the matter had gone very far, it came to Mr. Guthrie's ears; whereupon he wrote the following letter to the Rev. J. R. Glass, of Musselburgh, the convener of the Committee:—

“EDINBURGH, 23rd November, 1848.

“MY DEAR MR. GLASS,—A bird of the air carried to me the unexpected news that there was a movement to provide with a manse the ‘Big Beggar Man’ of the Manse Fund. . . .

“Such a testimony of the kindness of brethren, you will believe me when I say it, I never looked for, and that when I undertook that mission I acted from no motive but a sense of duty to our Divine Head, and of affection for my esteemed and suffering brethren, and for no end personal save that of the satisfaction of seeing our Church strengthened, and those who had borne such noble testimony to the truth with good warm walls around them and a wind and water-tight roof over their heads.

“Though my tongue has been tied, and my hands shackled for months gone by, yet my eyes have not been closed, nor my heart, I hope, dead and frozen. Now, I have, within these few weeks or days past, been grieved to see that our India Mission and other schemes, and even the Manse Fund itself, have such difficulties to contend with in these difficult times;\* and I feel it to be wrong that I should allow anything personal to me to stand as the smallest obstruction in the way of doing our full duty to the cause of our Master, our brethren at home, and the perishing heathen abroad.

“And so, my dear Sir, with my most cordial and unfeigned thanks to you, and those other kind friends who have interested

\* Trade was still paralyzed by the effects of the railway crisis in the previous year.



themselves in this cause, I have to request that you will call your Committee together, lay this communication before them, and then (as Dr. Chalmers used to say was the office of Committees) consign this affair to a quiet and decent grave. I take the will for the deed, and pray you, with affectionate regards, &c."

Ultimately, Mr. Guthrie's objections to receive some token of his brethren's gratitude were removed; and, for the last seventeen years of his life, he occupied a villa in a suburb of Edinburgh, one of whose attractions in his eyes was, that part of the purchase-money was a thank-offering to him from his country brethren.



## CHAPTER VII.

### RAGGED SCHOOLS.

It has been remarked with truth that it was the same element of his nature—*compassion*—which enlisted Dr. Guthrie\* in the enterprise of providing homes for the children of *outed* country ministers, and of rescuing from starvation and ignorance the outcast children of the city streets. A connecting link may thus be traced between his Manse Fund Mission, which terminated so successfully in 1846, and the Ragged School enterprise, on which he entered in the following year.

The *rationale* of the latter movement is now well known, and widely appreciated. One aspect of it has been forcibly presented by Charles Dickens. In an eloquent letter, addressed in 1846 to the *Daily News*, Dickens described the Ragged Schools then begun in London as “an effort to introduce among the most miserable and neglected outcasts some knowledge of the commonest principles of morality and religion; to commence their recognition as immortal human creatures,

\* Mr. Guthrie did not receive the degree of D.D. till 1849; but, for the sake of convenience, we speak of him throughout this chapter under his more familiar designation.



before the gaol chaplain becomes their only school-master; to suggest to society that its duty to this wretched throng, foredoomed to crime and punishment, rightfully begins at some distance from the police-office; and that the careless maintenance from year to year in this capital city of the world of a vast hopeless nursery of ignorance, misery, and vice, a breeding-place for the hulks and gaols, is horrible to contemplate."

The scheme is one of the latest developments of Christian philanthropy. Prison discipline has, since the days of John Howard, undergone a thorough reform; yet, while the condition of our prisons was ameliorated, until a comparatively recent date, strange as it may seem, little or nothing was attempted to diminish the future supply of prisoners. Year after year, a fresh crop of miserable young creatures was suffered to grow up, for whom no man seemed to care. Passing through the various stages of juvenile delinquency, they developed ere long into hardened criminals, and so, continuously, the process went on; nor was it until the children of the streets had committed crime, and found themselves within the grim walls of a cell, that the country thought of providing them with clothing, or food either for mind or body. To arrest a main stream of sin and sorrow at its very fountain head—to lay hold of those who are "ready to perish" ere they have got hopelessly beyond our reach—is an endeavour as wise and patriotic as it is Christian; and few men nowadays will dispute the need or the value of Ragged Schools.



Let it be understood that a Ragged School—in the sense of the term used by Dr. Guthrie—implies a school where, along with education both sacred and secular, food, clothing, and industrial training are gratuitously supplied. The honour of having devised those admirable institutions belongs to Sheriff Watson,\* who in 1841 opened in Aberdeen the first Ragged (or, to use his term,) Industrial Feeding School. The progress of the movement has been marvellous since that date; and although Dr. Guthrie—as he willingly acknowledged—only followed in the footsteps of his friend, he did more than any other man to popularise the scheme, and by his pen and voice to draw towards it the attention of the whole country. It is not without justice that Mr. Smiles, in “Self-Help,” has denominated him “the Apostle of the Ragged School movement,” for he raised such a tide of sympathy in their favour, that now there is scarcely a town of any importance in Britain which has not such a Bethesda for the little waifs of the street, while at ten of our seaports are stationed training-ships, which are neither more nor less than Ragged Schools afloat.

The condition of the children for whose rescue these schools have been opened painfully impressed Dr. Guthrie at an early period of his ministry. “Five-and-thirty years ago,” he wrote, in 1872, “on first coming to this city, I had not spent a month in my daily walks

\* Dr. Guthrie's third son, Patrick, married in 1860 a niece of Sheriff Watson—Mary, daughter of Laurence Anderson.



in our Cowgate and Grass-market without seeing that, with worthless, drunken, and abandoned parents for their only guardians, there were thousands of poor innocent children, whose only chance of being saved from a life of ignorance and crime lay in a system of compulsory education." But he saw as clearly, that even were such a system obtained (of which the prospect then seemed far distant), the attempt to teach children who were starving and in rags would prove hopeless. A humble man in England had dealt with this difficulty on a small scale; and Dr. Guthrie has related how, indirectly, that attempt stimulated himself to deal with it on a much greater :—

"My first interest in the cause of Ragged Schools was awakened by a picture which I saw in Anstruther, on the shores of the Firth of Forth. It represented a cobbler's room; he was there himself, spectacles on nose, an old shoe between his knees; that massive forehead and firm mouth indicating great determination of character; and from beneath his bushy eyebrows benevolence gleamed out on a group of poor children, some sitting, some standing, but all busy at their lessons around him. Interested by this scene, we turned from the picture to the inscription below; and with growing wonder read how this man, by name 'John Pounds,' by trade a cobbler, in Portsmouth, had taken pity on the ragged children, whom ministers and magistrates, ladies and gentlemen, were leaving to run wild, and go to ruin on their streets; how, like a good shepherd, he had gone forth to gather in these outcasts, how he had trained them up in virtue and knowledge, and how, looking for no fame, no recompense from man, he, single-handed, while earning his daily bread by the sweat of his face, had, ere he died, rescued from ruin and saved to society no fewer than five hundred children.

"I confess that I felt humbled. I felt ashamed of myself. I well remember saying to my companion, in the enthusiasm of the moment, and in my calmer and cooler hours I have seen no reason for unsaying it, 'That man is an honour to humanity.



He has deserved the tallest monument ever raised on British shores ! ' Nor was John Pounds only a benevolent man. He was a genius in his way ; at any rate, he was ingenious ; and, if he could not catch a poor boy in any other way, like Paul, he would win him by guile. He was sometimes seen hunting down a ragged urchin on the quays of Portsmouth, and compelling him to come to school, not by the power of a policeman, but a potato ! He knew the love of an Irishman for a potato, and might be seen running alongside an unwilling boy with one held under his nose, with a temper as hot and a coat as ragged as his own."

That visit to Anstruther occurred in 1841, two years before the Disruption. The excitement of the Church question, and the share he had to take thereafter in consolidating the Free Church, diverted for a time his energies and thoughts into other channels. Still, the condition of these city waifs recurred often to his thoughts.

"One night I went with one of my elders to the police office. In a room hung with bunches of skeleton keys, dark lanterns, and other implements of housebreaking, sat the lieutenant of the watch, who, seeing me handed in at the midnight hour by a police commissioner, looked surprise itself. Having satisfied him that there was no misdemeanour, we proceeded to visit the wards, and, among other sad and miserable objects, saw a number of children, houseless and homeless, who found there a shelter for the night. Cast out in the morning, and subsisting as they best could during the day, this wreck of society, like the *wreck* of the sea-shore, came drifting in again at evening-tide.

"After visiting a number of cells, I remember looking down from a gallery upon an open space, where five or six human beings were stretched on the stone pavement buried in slumber ; and right before the stove, its ruddy light shining full on his face, lay a poor child, who attracted my especial attention. He was miserably clad ; he seemed about eight years old ; he had the sweetest face I ever saw ; his bed was the pavement, his pillow a brick, and as he lay calm in



sleep, forgetful of all his sorrows, he might have served for a picture of injured innocence. His story was sad, not singular. He knew neither father nor mother, brothers nor friends, in the wide world; his only friends were the police, his only home their office. How he lived they did not know; but there he was at night; the stone by the stove was a better bed than the steps of a cold stair. I could not get that boy out of my head or heart for days and nights together. I have often regretted that some effort was not made to save him. Before now, launched on the sea of human passions and exposed to a thousand temptations, he has, too probably, become a melancholy wreck; left by a society, more criminal than he, to become a criminal, and then punished for his fate, not his fault."

It was with delight and the deepest interest Dr. Guthrie heard of Sheriff Watson's work at Aberdeen, as well as of a school established on the same principle in the following year at Dundee. In Edinburgh, meanwhile, Mr. Smith, the excellent governor of Edinburgh prison for the last thirty-five years, had in 1842 laid before the Inspectors of Prisons a proposal to establish a school of industry for juvenile delinquents in Edinburgh; in 1845 he printed a circular letter calling the attention of the Edinburgh ministers and magistrates to the lamentable fact that seven hundred and forty children under fourteen years of age (and of that number, two hundred and forty-five under ten years old) had been committed to prison during the three previous years. In Edinburgh itself, therefore, the Ragged School movement had a pioneer in Governor Smith, but it was left to Dr. Guthrie to rouse the community at large to its duty.

It had been ascertained that at least one thousand



boys and girls were growing up in that city ignorant in the midst of knowledge, savages in the midst of civilisation, heathens in the midst of Christianity; many of them orphans, some of them—worse off than orphans—with drunken and cruel parents. They lived in dark, squalid rooms, or were driven to the streets to sleep in some stair or empty cellar. These were the children whom afterwards he named “city Arabs,” a designation which has found a place in our vocabulary.

The power of food as a magnet, which Pounds the cobbler had employed in Portsmouth to attract destitute children to school, had been confirmed by the experience of Aberdeen and Dundee; and Dr. Guthrie has narrated a dialogue on this very point with two subjects of the class he sought to save :—

“Strolling one day” (probably in 1845 or 1846) “with a friend among the romantic scenery of the crags and green valleys around Arthur Seat, we came at length to St. Anthony’s well, and sat down on the great black stone beside it, to have a talk with the ragged boys who pursue their calling there. Their ‘finnies’ were ready with a draught of the clear cold water in hope of a halfpenny. We thought it would be a kindness to them, and certainly not out of character in us, to tell them of the living water that springeth up to life eternal, and of Him who sat on the stone of Jacob’s well, and who stood in the Temple, and cried, ‘If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.’ By way of introduction, we began to question them about schools. As to the boys themselves, one was fatherless, the son of a poor widow; the father of the other was alive, but a man of low habits and bad character. Both were poorly clothed. The one had never been at school; the other had sometimes attended a Sabbath school.

“Encouraged by the success of Sheriff Watson, who had the honour to lead the enterprise, the idea of a Ragged School was then floating in my brain; and so, with reference to the scheme,



and by way of experiment, I said, 'Would you go to school if—besides your learning—you were to get breakfast, dinner, and supper there?' It would have done any man's heart good, to have seen the flash of joy that broke from the eyes of one of them, the flush of pleasure on his cheek, as—hearing of three sure meals a day—the boy leapt to his feet, and exclaimed, 'Ay, will I, sir, and bring the hail land,\* too;' and then, as if afraid I might withdraw what seemed to him so large and munificent an offer, he exclaimed, 'I'll come for but my dinner, sir!'"

During the larger portion of 1845-46, as explained in the preceding chapter, Dr. Guthrie was absent from Edinburgh; but he had not long returned from his Manse Fund tour till he embarked on this new mission of mercy. It was in 1847 he first became known to the world as a philanthropist, by the publication, in the beginning of that year, of his (first) "Plea for Ragged Schools." The circumstances which led to his writing it are thus related by himself:—

"My congregation of Free St. John's, after building their church, found themselves in possession of a large room in its underground story. We had to consider to what good purpose this under building could be turned. The neighbourhood swarmed with hundreds of ragged children, who, obliged to steal or beg their food, or starve—neither went nor could go to any common school; and, with the view of saving a few of these, I proposed that the congregation should set up and maintain a ragged feeding industrial school for some twenty or thirty waifs. The proposal was agreed to, and orders given for the necessary apparatus of soup-boiler and porridge-pot. Some of our office-bearers, however, became alarmed, not very unnaturally, at the responsibilities we were about to incur: and in consequence the attempt was abandoned.

"I was cast down at this. Indeed I never was so much cast down in all my life: I felt the vexation and grief of a man who, having launched a good sturdy boat, sees her before she has

\* All the children in the same "land" or tenement of building.



taken ten strokes from the shore seized by a mighty billow, flung back, and dashed to pieces on the strand. But it was not a time to sit and wring my hands. These poor, wretched, ignorant, neglected children were perishing around me, and something must be done. I could appeal to the public, so that instead of having a small cock-boat with the flag of Free St. John's hoisted at its peak, I could build a frigate with a Union Jack flying from its mast-head: I accordingly wrote my first appeal, and made my first appearance in print."

"I published my Plea" (he wrote to Mr. Carment, a year and a half thereafter) "with fear and trembling, and but that I was, with yourself, a very vehement advocate of Ragged Schools, I would never have ventured on such a walk. If a man's fire is kindled and passion up, he'll *run* along the narrow ledge of a precipice, where, in his cooler, calmer moments, he would not venture to creep." And we have heard him mention more recently, in illustration of how little a man sees before him, his own experience in connection with that *brochure*. He was at the time almost without experience as a writer, and extremely diffident of success. "I remember," he said, "of returning home after committing the manuscript to the printer, and thinking, Well, what a fool I have made of myself!"

How was he mistaken! Every post brought in, from all kinds of persons, letters of thanks and laudation, and (what he valued much more) substantial proofs that his appeal had gone home to the writers' consciences and hearts. "I was astonished at the result of my first Plea for Ragged Schools. It fell like a spark among combustibles; it was like a shot fired from the Castle, and it



brought me more volunteers to man my boat than she could well carry."

When Dr. McCrie published his great work, the *Life of Knox*, he was surprised one day, on the opening of his study door, to see Dugald Stewart enter, and after that famous metaphysician had explained the object of his visit, and pronounced a high encomium on the book he had just finished reading, McCrie rose, bowed modestly, and said—"Jucundum est laudari a laudato."\* With feelings somewhat similar, Dr. Guthrie received the following letter from the greatest of British critics:—

"24, MORAY PLACE, *Sunday, March 14th, 1847.*

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—You must have had too many thanks and compliments from mere strangers, on your late thrilling appeal on behalf of our destitute schools, to feel any surprise at finding among the bearers of such offerings one whose name probably is not unknown to you, and of whom you may even have heard as one of the humblest and least efficient promoters of the great and good work to which you have rendered such memorable service.

"I have long considered you and Dr. Chalmers as the two great benefactors of your age and country, and admired and envied you beyond all your contemporaries, though far less for your extraordinary genius and eloquence, than for the noble uses to which you have devoted these gifts, and the good you have done by this use of them. In all these respects, this last effort of yours is perhaps the most remarkable and important; and among the many thousand hearts that have swelled and melted over these awakening pages, I think I may say that none has been more deeply touched than my own. If I were young enough to have the chance of tracing his passage to manhood, I believe I should have taken a boy on your recommendation; but, as it is, I can only desire you to take one for me, and to find him a better superintendent; and for this purpose I enclose

\* "It is pleasant to be praised by one who is himself the object of praise."



a draft for £50, which I request you to apply in the way you think best for the advancement of your great experiment.

"I trust that the object I have in view will be sufficient apology for the trouble I may be giving, and beg that you will believe me, Reverend and dear Sir, with all good wishes,

"Very respectfully and faithfully yours,

"F. JEFFREY."

Almost every newspaper gave extracts from the Plea, while (an honour which seldom falls to the lot of a sixpenny pamphlet) it formed the subject of an article in the *Edinburgh Review*. Subscriptions to the extent of £700 were in a few weeks in Dr. Guthrie's hands; an interim committee was formed; and a room hired in a house on the Castle Hill.\* To himself, one of the most delightful features of the way in which his Appeal had been met, was the sympathy with the object in view shown by persons of every Evangelical denomination in the city. Forgetful of all distinctions in the greatness of the emergency, they combined in offering him ready aid.

"Some people at first suspected it was to be a Free Church job. A distinguished man called upon a friend of mine, when I took it upon myself to summon the community of Edinburgh on behalf of those poor children, and said to him, 'I've got a summons from Guthrie to attend a meeting; I don't think I'll go.' 'Oh,' said my friend, 'I think you should go, the object is good.' 'But,' he replied, 'I'm afraid it's a Free Church job'!"

\* About the same time, a feeding-school for the poorest class of children was established by the Rev. Dr. Robertson in the New Greyfriars parish. "It matters little," were Dr. Robertson's generous words after Dr. Guthrie's death, "who it was that established the first Ragged School in Edinburgh or in Scotland. It is not the single school which Thomas Guthrie established under the shadow of our ancient fortress which is his real monument, but the hundreds of Ragged Schools which the powerful pleading of his eloquent tongue and pen has planted in half the cities of the British empire."



At the preliminary meeting of which he here speaks, and which was held on 22nd March, 1847, he said—

“ I and my friends who originally moved in this matter are desirous to be lost sight of, and to be merged in a general committee containing a full and fair representation of all classes in the community. I am anxious to retire altogether from further public management of this matter. If anything I have done can be the means of promoting such a blessed scheme, I shall count it one of the happiest circumstances of my life ; and it will be some amends for the hours of misery, and almost of agony, which I have endured in this city, in being compelled to look on temporal and spiritual misery which I found myself altogether unable to relieve.”

At that meeting, a general committee was accordingly nominated by the Lord Provost, Mr. Adam Black. That committee, which contained men of all shades of opinion, political and ecclesiastical, forthwith prepared a constitution and rules for the new Association. These were as follows—(and we quote them here, that the reader may understand the unhappy controversy to which their interpretation afterwards gave rise) :—

“ It is the object of this Association to reclaim the neglected or profligate children of Edinburgh, by affording them the benefits of a good, common, and Christian education, and by training them to habits of regular industry, so as to enable them to earn an honest livelihood, and fit them for the duties of life. The general plan upon which the schools shall be conducted, shall be as follows, viz. :—

“ To give the children an allowance of food for their daily support.

“ To instruct them in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

“ To train them in habits of industry, by instructing and employing them daily in such sorts of work as are suited to their years.

“ To teach them the truths of the Gospel, making the Holy Scriptures the groundwork of instruction.”



On 8th April, 1847, at a public meeting held in the Music Hall, this constitution was unanimously approved. "For some short while, matters went smoothly enough. There was confidence within our committee and no cloud without, and the happy, I will say the holy, spectacle was seen of men, who had been at war, now cultivating the arts of peace, forgetting differences in a common object, and meeting with swords turned into ploughshares, to break up the ground which had long been fallow. We began with a small number, but were gradually filling up, when symptoms of that controversy began to appear which ended in an open rupture."

The circumstances which led to that rupture were these:—In the school, when first commenced, about one-half of the children were of Irish and so, presumably, Roman Catholic parentage. Ere long, it was asserted by an anonymous writer in a newspaper that Catholics were excluded from the school. This being easily disproved, it was next asserted, that the constitution of the Society was violated, and the school so conducted as virtually to exclude Roman Catholic children.

Whatever Dr. Guthrie may have suspected regarding their influence, the priesthood in Edinburgh were not the ostensible movers in the matter, as they had been in Dundee, and as Cardinal Wiseman was at a later date in London, when in a sermon he denounced the Ragged Schools there. Had Roman Catholics come boldly forward in Edinburgh, Dr. Guthrie would not have been seriously disconcerted; but what he felt was the delicate position



in which this misunderstanding placed him towards parties who had shown a real interest in his enterprise, and whose talents and social position gave them weight in the community. He was most unwilling to contemplate a separation (if it could possibly be avoided) from these gentlemen, in respect to a matter where he and they had much in common; but he felt the question was one of conscience, and he determined to maintain, at all hazards, the ground he had taken up from the first.

TO THE RIGHT HON. FOX MAULE, M.P.

*"June 24th, 1847.*

"It is a very sad thing that one cannot attempt the salvation of these poor outcasts without interference from parties who were leaving them quietly to perish. People who will do nothing themselves for the education and amelioration of these unhappy children, however slow at giving money, are swift at finding fault. Our schools are on a footing truly Catholic; but because we will not permit them to be made a Popish machinery, the priests oppose them, and because we will not part with God's Word and banish the Bible from these schools, the falsely so-called Liberal Educationalists throw cold water on the holy fire we seek to kindle. These schools are intended for the children who are the outcasts and offscourings of our lowest streets, and we consider ourselves as much in the place of parents to them as if, in place of sending them to these schools, we opened our doors to them and received them into our families. The priests are at the bottom of this movement, and using others as their tools.

"I hope the day will never come when, in this free and Christian land, we shall be deprived of the liberty of feeding and training up in the fear of God a poor outcast with our money without consent of a dominant priest. You will see from a copy of rules which I have ordered to be sent how really Catholic we are. We cannot consent to be Roman Catholic—while we leave them full liberty to pursue their own plans. The truth is, it is an utter abuse of terms to call these children either Protestant or Catholic. They are steeped in all the darkness of heathenism, and more than all its vices. In the



event of any child of a *poor, decent Catholic* being admitted into our schools, we are perfectly willing to intrust that child to its parent on the Sabbath day to take to chapel."

"The Acting Committee," wrote Dr. Guthrie, "in their own defence, and in answer to the charge of introducing a system of religious tests into the schools, and of excluding in Roman Catholic children the largest portion of those children for whom the schools were designed, published a statement. Though the efforts of the Committee were successful in satisfying a large portion of the public, there still remained some of our original subscribers, between whom and the Committee there was an important and, as it proved to be, an irreconcilable difference. These gentlemen requested the Lord Provost to call a meeting 'for the purpose of having it clearly ascertained, whether the schools will be conducted on a system which must necessarily exclude children of the Roman Catholic or any faith which differs from that of Protestant teachers?' It was now feared, though not openly proclaimed, that an attempt would be made to exclude the Word of God from the Ragged School, and limit the education to secular instruction, leaving the Protestant and Roman Catholic parties to manage the religious interests of the children as they best might. The battle, which had begun in Aberdeen and Dundee, had now extended to the capital, and the public meeting which had been called by the Lord Provost was, more than any meeting which had been for a long time held in Edinburgh, looked forward to with the liveliest



interest by the warmest friends of Bible truth, and the wisest friends of these unhappy children."

The day of the public meeting, July 2nd, 1847, arrived, and those who were present will not soon forget the scene. It had all the excitement of a pitched battle. The Hall was filled to the ceiling long ere the speakers appeared. On either hand of the Lord Provost were ranged the opposing parties; Lord Murray, Professor Gregory, and Mr. Simpson, advocate,—representing the "Liberal Protestants,"—on the one side; and Dr. Guthrie, Sheriff Speirs, and Dr. Lindsay Alexander on the other.

"These Ragged Schools," said Dr. Guthrie, in the speech he made on that occasion, "are peculiar schools. They are not intended for the children of ordinary decent parents. Their very existence, the crying necessity for them, arises from the existence of a class in our cities who are in fact nothing at all. It is an utter abuse of words to call these children Roman Catholics or to call them Protestants. They are outcasts, regardless of all religion—without even the profession of any; and it is in that light and character I must look at them here.

"Mark how I stand. I say that the responsibility of the religious upbringing of the child lies upon the parent; and if there be no parent, or none to act a parent's part (if the parent, for instance, be a worthless, profligate mother), on whom does the responsibility next lie? I join issue with the Catholic here. He says that it lies with the priest. I say it lies with the good Samaritan who acts the parent's part. I say that it neither lies with the priest nor the Levite who passed by upon the other side; it lies with the man who resolves, by the strength of his own exertions, to save the poor outcast child. I shall never forgive myself in this world that once I did not save a child from ruin. Had I attempted it (there being then no Ragged School), what should I have done? I would have brought it, a homeless, helpless outcast, to my own home, and before God and man would have felt myself bound to give it



the Bible I give to my own children. What is a Ragged School but a gatherer of such miserable outcasts? They are cast upon my care to share in the blessings of my humanity and Christianity.

"What difference is it to me whether I save a poor child from the wreck of society or from the wreck of the sea? Let me put a case. A ship has stranded on the stormy shore. I strip, and plunging headlong into the billows, buffet them with this strong arm till I reach the wreck. From the rigging, where he hangs, I seize and save a boy. I bear him to the shore, and through the crowd, who watched my rising and falling head, and blessed me with their prayers, I take him home. What happens now? Forth steps a Roman Catholic priest, and, forsooth, because yon ship contained its Irish emigrants, claims the child, the prey of my humanity, the half-drowned boy that clings to his preserver's side; he would spoil me of my orphan, and rear him up in what I deem dangerous error. I have two answers to this demand. My first is, I saved the boy; the hand that plucked him from the wreck is the hand which shall lead him in the way to heaven. My second is, to point him to the wreck and the roaring sea; I bid him strip and plunge like me, and save those that still perish there.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I rejoice that the cloud which hung over the Ragged Schools is now dispelled. There were some who doubted before whether they would have a decidedly religious school of a decidedly Bible character. Thanks be to God for this storm; it has cleared the atmosphere. Above the door of these Ragged Schools men shall henceforth see an open Bible, this glorious text upon its page, 'Search the Scriptures.' No man feels a more lively interest in these schools than I do. I have thought and pondered over them. I have prayed over them, and I am not ashamed to say that I have wept over them; but, dear as they are to my heart, I say, perish the Ragged Schools, if they are only to be kept up by parting with the Bible. I would rather that we were found like the body of the sailor boy which lay on the lone sea-shore. A handkerchief was tied around it, and when the spoiler came, he thought it was gold; he tore it open and found the Bible which his mother gave him with a mother's blessing. And now, if other men won't do it, these hands of mine shall do it; I shall bind the Bible to the Ragged Schools, and committing this cause to the care of Providence, there I take my stand."



After the speakers on both sides had been heard, the Lord Provost put the question to the meeting, and in support of the views thus expressed quite a forest of hands was held up in every part of the building. "With the exception," writes Dr. Guthrie, "of a very small portion of the audience, that immense and influential assembly, embracing Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents, expressed its entire and hearty approval of the step which the committee had taken, in resolving that the Word of God should be taught *during the ordinary school hours*. Edinburgh never uttered its voice more distinctly or more decidedly on any question or on any occasion. It was a blessed sight to see Protestants of all Evangelical denominations, and those of them who but a few years before had been arrayed against each other in the Voluntary and Non-Intrusion controversies, now fighting side by side, rallying around the Bible with the kindness of brethren and the keenness of men in earnest."

TO PROVOST GUTHRIE.

"EDINBURGH, July 7th, 1847.

"The fight came off gloriously last Friday. I was in a delicate position, very much annoyed about the matter. Well, I never went to a meeting so anxious, and never left one so thankful. All men think it is the most important and the most successful meeting which has been held here for days and years. The lords, I take it, won't come back in a hurry to have their coats dusted before an audience in the Music Hall. We had unspeakable cause to bless the Lord. 'The men of might' (on the other side) 'have not found their hands.' My known liberality gave a force to my blow, which no talent would have given to the arm of a bigot or narrow-minded man. As I told Tweedie and Candlish, by way half joke half earnest,



people would say, 'Well, if Guthrie won't swallow this proposed dose of Dunfermline and Murray, it must be very bad indeed.'

The reference in the latter sentence will be understood when it is explained that Dr. Guthrie was considered by certain persons to take somewhat low ground as to the value and results of the religious instruction communicated in ordinary day-schools. He did not certainly rate these so highly as some of his brethren; because in the case of children whose parents were church-going and well conducted, he trusted much more to home and pastoral training than to the ordinary day-school teacher for instilling divine truth. And if he were asked, Why refuse, for these Ragged Schools, arrangements with which you are satisfied elsewhere? this was his reply, "Considering the condition of the children, and the character of the parents who are living without the fear either of God or man, and do not even make a profession of religion, the principles which might rule a national system of education are not applicable here."

It was on this very account that he felt great anxiety to secure qualifications of a special kind in the Ragged School teachers and officials. "What I desiderate in all our officials," he wrote in a letter to Miss Louisa Hope, "is sincere piety; a warm Christian affection for the souls of these poor children; a mind which will not be content with a perfunctory discharge of duty, not even with remarkable success in the way of improving their intellects and reforming their outward habits; but a mind and soul which burns with love to Christ, and



will be satisfied with nothing short of seeing these children converted and saved.”\*

The result of the discussion was, that those gentlemen of the committee who disapproved the principles of Dr. Guthrie and his friends instituted another school, which they named the United Industrial, on the principle of joint secular and separate religious instruction. The general funds of that school are devoted to secular instruction alone; while at a certain hour the children are separated, the Protestants to receive religious instruction from a Protestant teacher, the Roman Catholics from a Catholic.

To the close of life, Dr. Guthrie remained unshaken as to the soundness of the principle on which he had taken his stand in refusing to allow the Roman Catholic faith to be taught within his school—viz., that he and others had virtually assumed the position of parents to the hapless children there. In 1857 he put the case thus:—“If a vicious, drunken, dissipated, and unnatural parent shall cast his offspring on the public—shall do what a brute beast won’t do, refuse to maintain his own child—the

\* “We observe,” wrote the Rev. William Arnot after Dr. Guthrie’s death, “that the organs of the more secular sections of the community admire the talents and character of Dr. Guthrie and pay a hearty tribute of respect to his memory. Some of them, at the same time, through a mental perversity allied to colour-blindness, refuse to recognise the fountain where the stream of his charities sprang. They own the greatness of his benevolent work, but knowingly intimate that, in order to perform these blessed services to the community, he came out of his theological circle, and left his Calvinism behind him. This is precisely the contrary of the truth. The stream of his benevolence flowed from the well-spring of his faith. It was the love of Christ that constrained him to visit the widows and orphans in their affliction.”



most monstrous thing I ever heard of is, that that parent shall not only throw on me the burden of maintaining his child, but shall attempt to lay on my conscience the far heavier burden of teaching that child what is not, according to my conscience, the Word of God." In the very last speech he made on behalf of these schools, in December, 1871, he illustrated his position by an incident from his own experience :—

"I spent," he said, "some weeks, seven years ago, in Brittany, in France. I went out one evening to look at a Foundling Hospital, one of those institutions which, however creditable to the humanity of the founders, are found to be detrimental to morality. By the gate was an opening in the wall; in that opening stood a box that turned on a pivot, beside which hung a bellrope. A woman waiting for the cloud of night, stealing under the shadow of the wall, approaches the door with noiseless steps, and taking her infant from under her shawl, she places it in the box and pulls the bell. At that signal, round goes the box bearing her child inside. There she parts with it for ever, and then, with some natural tears, withdraws. Assuming that woman to be a Protestant—and there are a few Protestants in that very Roman Catholic country—and that, although she had fallen from the paths of virtue, she had not forgotten the lessons learned at her mother's knee, and that she, along with the child, puts in a paper requesting the nuns and priests and sisters of charity within this Foundling Home to bring up her child in the Protestant faith, would they do it? I should like uncommonly well to see the nun, priest, or sister of charity who would comply with such a request. They would be *Sisters of Charity* indeed! What would their answer be? (I respect them for it, for it were one according to their conscience; and I respect everybody, be he Pagan, Papist, or Protestant, who acts according to conscience.) Their answer would be what ours in such circumstances is :—'You have cast your child on us; we feed it, we house it, we clothe it, we teach it, we are in the room of parents to it, and in consequence we cannot do otherwise than train up the child as if it were our own, according to what we believe to be the true faith.'



"That was our position in the beginning, and some people thought we were rather *dour* and obstinate in maintaining it. I did not sympathize with those who thought so. Some of us foresaw, in the attempt then made to drive us from our position, the introduction of the thin end of that wedge which Popery but waited time and opportunity to drive home, removing the Bible from the schools, and the children altogether away from every liberal and Protestant influence. In Ireland they are at that now. They were too astute here, twenty years ago, to show their hand at once. They kept themselves in the background. We heard beautiful speeches about what a pretty thing it was to see Protestant children sitting cheek-by-jowl on the same bench with Roman Catholics, learning the same lessons. *Was it not brethren dwelling together in unity?* Now, if we look to Ireland, what see we there? The time has come when Cardinal Cullen and the Roman Catholic hierarchy think they can let the cat out of the bag! It is out, and what have we? Cardinal Cullen and the priesthood demanding of the British Government that, while the schools are maintained out of the public purse, there shall be no mixing of Protestants and Catholics in school; that these schools shall be entirely Popish. A demand this, which I hope the Government of this country will resist."

"I may have been right," he wrote to Mr. W. Chambers of Glenormiston, who took the opposite view from himself, "or I may have been wrong. The day will declare it. But I look back to no struggle in which I was ever called to engage with a clearer conscience than to the one in question." He rejoiced, nevertheless, to know that multitudes of children were, by means of the United Industrial School, rescued from a career of crime and wretchedness, and he never viewed that Charity as, in any other than an honourable sense, a rival to his own.

"I do not find fault," were his words after the heat of the collision had passed away, "with others who differ from us in their principles and plans. Let every man be fully per-



sued in his own mind, and let all men try who shall do most and best for those that are ready to perish. I am thoroughly convinced of the soundness of our views; I adhere to them strongly; I hold them to be of high importance. But I will make no attempt to throw odium on those who are honestly following out their own convictions. In pity for human wretchedness, in the desire to promote the welfare of the unhappy—to pluck these children from circumstances of most affecting misery and a life of certain wretchedness and crime—we are brethren, and let there be no strife between us. I say to them, as Abraham did to Lot, ‘Is not the whole land before thee? If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.’”

The discussion in Edinburgh made itself felt over the whole country, and, so far as we know, there is not one of the hundreds of Ragged Schools in England and Scotland but has adopted the principles of Dr. Guthrie as regards the unrestricted use of the Holy Scriptures; (in his own words), “the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible; the Bible without note or comment—without the authoritative interpretation of priest or presbyter—as the foundation of all its religious teaching, and of its religious teaching to all.”

“LONDON, *February 11th*, 1856.

“Our Reformatory Meeting was held on Friday; I fancy one hundred present. Among other public men, Marquis of Salisbury, Lord — Cecil, Monckton Milnes, Sir John Pakington, Adderley, &c. It was the old fight, save that it assumed a less determinate shape.

“The resolutions were drawn up by Macgregor. Milnes, Pakington, and Adderley maintained that the introduction of the words ‘Holy Scriptures’ would operate to the exclusion of Papists. This, Lord Shaftesbury (a mistake on his part) denied. I agreed with the former, and differed with Shaftesbury, giving them the history of our Edinburgh business in proof of it; and argued for retaining these words just because we could not co-



operate with Roman Catholics in this matter. An attempt was made, in order not to appear so exclusive, to alter some of the practical parts of the resolutions. We resisted it, decided and kept the scheme intact by a great majority. They are now on the right rail, and I have no doubt will go on triumphantly."

By the end of 1847, three schools had been established in Edinburgh under Dr. Guthrie's auspices—one for boys, another for girls, and a third for children of both sexes under ten years of age, with a total attendance of two hundred and sixty-five children, who received food, education, and industrial training.

While glad to know of some hundreds of Ragged Schools in London, Dr. Guthrie desiderated a much more complete carrying out of the system than many of these are able to adopt.

"In regard to London, six-sevenths of the Ragged Schools are not feeding-schools at all; the children are taken in two or three hours in the evening, and the attendance is most irregular. A Lord Mayor's Day to a considerable extent clears out the schools. I venture to say, that there is not such regular attendance anywhere as in our Ragged Schools, because the children know that they get no porridge unless they come there. I remember, on going down the High Street early one morning, of seeing a number of our children coming up. One of them was borne on the shoulders of another, and, on my asking the reason, he said that the little fellow had burned his foot the night before and he was carrying him to school. That would not have happened in any other school in Edinburgh. (*Evidence before the Royal Commission on Scotch Education, December 5th, 1864.*)

Few things delighted Dr. Guthrie more than to act as



cicerone, and accompany visitors to his schools; for, with a natural partiality, he maintained that of all the sights in Edinburgh, there was none so worthy of a visit as the schools on the Castle Hill. To him the eyes of these poor children shone brighter than the jewels of the old Scottish Crown in the neighbouring castle; and certainly no thoughtful man who remembers their past history can look without emotion at these rows of boys and girls, cheerful, tidy, and intelligent, when at dinner-hour they stand up to thank God for their plain but wholesome fare.

Among those most intimately associated with him in the earlier stages of his Ragged School work, and who shared in his own enthusiasm, were the late Sheriff Jameson; Mr. Smith, the Governor of Edinburgh prison; Dr. George Bell; and, in a more private but not less efficient capacity, the late Miss M. Elliott Lockhart,\* of whom he wrote—"She has been my 'right hand' in benevolent work for years."

In his first "Plea for Ragged Schools," Dr. Guthrie had urged it as a powerful argument in favour of his scheme, that it harmonized the diverse theories of two very eminent philanthropists as to the proper mode of dealing with a degraded population. "Our scheme," he wrote, "furnishes a common walk for both. They meet

\* It was to her that Dr. Guthrie thus dedicated his "Seedtime and Harvest of Ragged Schools:"—"To M. E. L., who has her name graven at full length on the grateful hearts of many children saved by means of that Original Ragged School which has owed so much of its success to her generous, zealous, and untiring labours."



in our school-room. Dr. Alison comes in with his bread—Dr. Chalmers with his Bible: here is food for the body—there for the soul.” When he wrote thus, in February, 1847, the friends of Dr. Chalmers looked forward to some years longer of honour and usefulness in store for him; and had he been spared to witness the controversy to which the religious constitution of the Original Ragged Schools gave rise, few can doubt which side he would have espoused. Within four months of the publication of his friend’s “Plea,” all Edinburgh was saddened as, on the morning of the 31st of May, the news passed from lip to lip, “Chalmers was found dead in his bed this morning.” Dr. Guthrie was deeply moved. For his great “chief” he had a profound admiration. “Ah,” said he, “men of his calibre are like mighty forest trees. We don’t know their size *till they are down.*”

“I intended” (he wrote on the 14th of June, to Mr. Fox Maule) “to have written you immediately after the death, and entered into the detail of such particulars as had come to my knowledge; but the truth is, I was utterly prostrated by the blow, and felt an aversion to do anything but ruminate on the past, measure the vastness of the loss, and speculate on the future.

“We will now need to be more cautious, foreseeing, and circumspect than ever. Chalmers, for the last three years, has not been so much, indeed, a moving power; but he has been a great balance-wheel. His very presence among us had a most combining, harmonizing, happy influence.

“Dr. Candlish is likely to be put into a college chair. Gordon resolutely refused, and a man may as soon move Arthur’s Seat as move him. I think it likely that Cunningham will be made Principal.”

On the day of the meeting in the Music Hall which



decided the constitution of the Ragged School, no layman rendered Dr. Guthrie's side such effective service as Mr. Graham Speirs, Sheriff of Midlothian. (See Autobiography, p. 208.) Before that year (1847) had run out, he too, a man in life's prime, had followed Dr. Chalmers to join the Church above.

*"December 28th, 1847.*

"I cannot say how deeply I have felt Mr. Speirs's death. He was such a friend : I don't know whether I esteemed or loved him most. And then in the Church, what an ornament to religion, what a pillar of the temple ! May the Lord give you and others in your place all the more grace now, since a great standard-bearer and champion has been borne off the field. It melts my heart, and opens afresh the fountain of my tears, to think that we shall see his face no more. It were a great mercy and blessing if a man of a kindred spirit can be appointed to his place. The Whig party lost nothing, but gained much, by having in him a man who, to their views in politics, brought the advantage of a decided and high religious character." (*To Mr. Fox Maule.*)

In the year following the first establishment of Ragged Schools in Edinburgh, Dr. Guthrie was laid aside from the active duties of his ministry by a serious illness ; and for many months the schools with which his name had become associated were deprived of his fostering care. But his pen was not idle. On the 10th of January, 1849, he issued a "Second Plea for Ragged Schools," in which he explained the working of the system, demonstrated how inadequate the existing Ragged Schools in Edinburgh were to overtake the destitution, and besought increased support. In that Plea he appealed to indubitable statistics in proof of the success which had attended the scheme. Each successive year, that success became



more apparent. The fifth report (for 1851) tells of two hundred and sixteen children sent out into the world from the Original Ragged Schools, and known to be earning their livelihood by honest industry.

. In direct proportion as the various Ragged Schools filled, the portion of the jail appropriated to juvenile delinquents emptied. The following facts and figures speak for themselves:—In 1847 (the year in which Ragged Schools were founded in Edinburgh) more than five per cent. of the whole number of prisoners in Edinburgh jail were under fourteen years of age,—315 out of 5,734; in 1851, the proportion had fallen to less than *one per cent.*, that is to say, while there were 5,869 prisoners, only fifty-six of these were under fourteen years of age. “From careful observation of the operation of the Ragged Industrial Schools,” wrote the Governor on 25th December, 1850, “I can have no doubt that they have been the principal instruments in effecting so desirable a change.” “I do not know,” was Dr. Guthrie’s characteristic comment on this, “I do not know whether, if matters go on at this rate, my good friend Mr. Smith won’t find some difficulty in deciding what to make of that department of the jail. By-and-by we may see (what I once saw in an old burgh in the kingdom of Fife) a jail in a most happy condition. The door was wide open, the hinges were rusting on the stones. Not only that, but the measured sound of little feet and the cheerful noise of a fiddle announced that the prison had been turned into a dancing-school!”



The public are not generally visitors of the prison; they could not, therefore, so readily appreciate the evidence which empty cells afforded as to the working of Ragged Schools; but there was another way in which their advantages became patent to every one who walked through the city :—

“ Before these schools were established, the streets swarmed with boys and girls whose trade was begging, and whose end was the jail. They rose every morning from the lower districts like a cloud of mosquitoes from a marsh, to disperse themselves over the city and its suburbs; and some of them had become most expert at their trade. I one day witnessed an instance of this at a time when typhus fever was raging in Edinburgh :—

“ I was in Hanover Street when a vinegar-looking old lady was toddling along, with a huge umbrella in her hand. A little urchin came up who had no cap on his head, but plenty of brains within; no shoes on his feet, but a great deal of understanding, for all that. Very well, I saw him fix upon that venerable old lady to be operated on, and Dr. Bell never, I will venture to say, performed an operation with half the dexterity with which that ragged boy ‘skinned’ the old lady. He approached her with a most pitiful look and whine. Her response was a snarl and poke of her umbrella. He saw there was no chance of getting at her purse through her philanthropy, so he thought to get at it through her selfishness. In an instant he rolled up the sleeve of a tattered jacket to the elbow of his yellow skinny arm, and running up displayed it, crying out to her, ‘Just out o’ the Infirmary, ma’am, with typhus!’ It was a *ruse* got up for the occasion; but the acting was perfect—the effect sudden, electric. The poor old body started as if she had received a shock. Diving her hand to the very bottom of her pocket, she took out a shilling, thrust it into his palm, and hobbled away, glad to get the little rogue out between the wind and her nobility!

“ All manner of ways did they try to fleece and bleed the public. At last, forth came police-bills warning the public not to encourage street begging. But the magistrates of Edinburgh might as well have attempted to roll back the tide at the pier of Leith, as to prevent me from giving money to a poor, starving, wretched child. That was not the way to meet



the evil. I was told about the evils of mendicancy; they were in the distance, whilst close at hand the evils of starvation were looking out of those hollow eyes. But how did we put down street begging? We set up our Ragged Schools. Some urchin now comes to me, and asks me for money. 'Not a sixpence, sir—not a half-penny. You go to the Ragged School and say Dr. Guthrie sent you.' That put down street begging, and nothing else could."

In his Second Plea, Dr. Guthrie had shown that, after deducting the pupils of all the Ragged Schools of the city, there were still in Edinburgh at least fifteen hundred children "growing up to disturb and disgrace society, and destined to entail, in their future career of crime, an enormous expense on the country." And if this were true of Edinburgh, the same condition of things existed in proportion all over the kingdom. Much, therefore, as private benevolence had effected, it was apparent that the necessities of the case would never be met in this way alone. So long as the success of Ragged Schools was problematical, their friends were contented to depend for their support on the Christian public (and from that source about £2,000 had been subscribed annually for the Original Ragged Schools); but when, at the end of some years, the advantage of such institutions was no longer matter of experiment, but of experience, their advocates felt justified in claiming for them the favour and the fostering aid of the country. The State had, in bygone years, spent millions in punishing criminals, and the success of prisons as reforming agencies had been grievously small. "You will in vain endeavour," said



the Lord Advocate of Scotland, when presiding at the meeting of Dr. Guthrie's Ragged School in 1852—"you will in vain endeavour, by prison discipline, mild or severe, by all your courts of justice, and by all your penal settlements, to diminish by one hair's breadth the amount of crime that prevails in the country." It seemed high time that some aid should be given by the State to arrest the process by which criminals are made. That Ragged Schools were operating successfully in that direction was now admitted by the most competent judges; the directors of the Edinburgh Original Ragged School accordingly resolved, along with other friends of the cause, to appeal to Government in their favour.

*"January 2nd, 1850.*

"You all know the object of my proposed visit to London. Dr. Bell, our Secretary, and Mr. Smith, governor of the jail, accompany me. I expect Sheriff Watson will join us from Aberdeen; and that in London we will be joined by Hastie, M.P. for Glasgow. We go up to Government, specially to the Marquis of Lansdowne, who is President of the Privy Council, in order to get a clause into the Minutes of Council on Education, embracing our Ragged Schools, for the purpose [of] giving us aid out of the public funds.

"We hold our public meeting here, on Monday the 14th, and we will have a most satisfactory report of our Ragged Schools this year. Since our schools were instituted there has been a regular and steady decrease of the number of juvenile criminals. In 1847, the proportion of these to the whole commitments was five per cent.; in 1848, four per cent.; in 1849, only three per cent." (*To his brother Patrick.*)

Of his visit to London, Dr. Guthrie tells—

"We met together in the morning, to consult as to the course I should adopt in bringing our case before Lord Lansdowne. I said, I shall tell him that every child left to become a criminal costs the country £800. 'Now,' says Mr. Smith (with all the



caution of a canny Scot). 'take care! If you cannot prove it, it is better not to state it.' . . . Lord Lansdowne sat with his back to a window, so that I could not see his face; but as I had to sit with my face towards it, he could see mine. One of my friends told me afterwards, that I was sitting on a chair three times the breadth of this table away from him, when I began to address him; but that as I got on, I edged nearer and nearer, till at last I was clapping him on the knee! I gave it to his Lordship in a speech of nearly an hour long, at which he seemed lost in astonishment.

" 'Look, my Lord,' I said to him, 'at the expense of rearing up a number of criminals in the country. Forget altogether that these poor children have souls; forget altogether that they have hearts that can be trodden and trampled on, and crushed as our own; forget that they are bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; forget their misery and wretchedness. I beg your Lordship to look at the money question alone. We take one of these children off the street, which is the open way to the jail, and place him in our school. We clothe and feed, and train and educate him, we hand him back to society a useful and valuable member of the community, and the whole expense of doing this is £25. But leave him alone, let him run his course—and instead of costing only £25 to make him a useful member of society, you do not close and finish with that boy, either by hanging or by penal settlement, without paying £800.' I had become warm with my subject, and out bolted the £800 before I was aware of it!

"I was afraid I had done wrong; but on the following night I was reassured by a conversation I had with Mr. Pierce, the gentleman at the head of the Bow Street police. He said, 'It is a waste of money and means to try and save the country otherwise than through the children, by giving them a sound education.' 'But how are you to get hold of the children and give them the education you speak of?' After some reflection he said, 'Well, I do not see any way in which they can get that, unless you feed them.' It was worth going to London to hear, from a person so well qualified to judge, such an opinion in favour of the system pursued in our Ragged School. 'But,' said I, 'what do you think of punishment?' 'Punishment!' he replied; 'I never see a boy placed at the bar of the police court but I say to myself, 'Well, my lad, you will cost the country £800 before we are done with you!'—echoing the very thing I had said in Whitehall the day before.

"That same night we explored St. Giles's along with Mr.



Pierce and two of his officers. The accounts they gave me of the state of London were perfectly frightful. I felt as if this city were sleeping over a volcano. After shouldering our way amid the rough and horrible strollers on the streets, we reached a shop. Mr. Pierce, without any other introduction than his own appearance, which is pretty respectable (standing, like myself, somewhere about six feet two without the shoes), entered at once, and said, 'Well, Missis, how many lodgers have you got to-night?' She informed him, and Mr. Pierce having got a candle, we first went along a dark passage, and then we got to the top of a corkscrew stair which led down to the bowels of the earth. As we were going down we heard laughter and the sound of uproar and riot coming up. I do not know what my friends felt, but I believe they were rather nervous like myself. The walls of the apartment we entered at the bottom of the stair were as black as a chimney, and beside the fire sat a colossal negro — one of the greatest ruffians in London. Kneeling on the ground near him were a number of men, to whom he was dealing out a pack of cards as black as his own paws. The room was filled with the worst of women, and with the most degraded-looking ruffians I ever saw. Some of those present had a guilty look, and shrank into a corner, while others, knowing that they were clean and clear of the police book, had a face and front of brass.

"Mr. Pierce asked, 'Have you got a girl here with green ribbons on her bonnet?' (We were not in search of any girl, with either green or black ribbons; but that was said as Mr. Pierce's excuse for going in.) Their bonnets were produced, to show that they were not of the fatal colour. Then my attention was turned to some children whom we found there. It was their only home. Some were orphans, some had been deserted by their parents; and into that horrible place they were floated every night, paying for their lodgings with the proceeds of their beggary and theft, flung out again on the bosom of society, and flung back again perfect wrecks as night fell."

At the close of his interview with the President of the Privy Council, Dr. Guthrie was requested by Lord Lansdowne to embody his statements in writing. He did so, and the result was a Memorial, which was printed and forwarded to head-quarters in 1851. In this care-



fully prepared statement, Dr. Guthrie rests the claim of Ragged Industrial Schools for Government support on two grounds: first, the success of the scheme; second, the verdict of the public in its favour.

In 1852, a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the condition of "criminal and destitute juveniles in this country, and what changes are desirable in their present treatment in order to supply industrial training, and to combine reformation with the due correction of juvenile crime." Dr. Guthrie gave evidence before this Committee in February, 1853.

"22, BURY STREET, ST. JAMES'S, LONDON, February 19th, 1853.

"I was at least two hours and a half before the Committee yesterday, and, unless I had been a man of no small presence of mind, I would have got into a pretty mess of confusion, for when I was going on to enter upon the particulars of our own *Ramsay Lane School*, the one bundle of my papers that belonged to that was amissing. It had, in some most unaccountable way, slipt from the parcel of papers I carried down in my hand, or I had been the victim of *juvenile delinquency*! . . . So we went on and got into the wide ocean; sometimes I agreed with the Member questioning, and sometimes I did not. I had a difficulty with one of my examiners, in making him understand that we had no set form of prayers *read* in school. We did not actually go over the ground of Lord Murray's battle, but were on the borders of it sometimes. I told them how the Roman Catholic parents hardly objected at all; that children, when withdrawn, we had reason to believe were removed through the influence of the priests; that the parents, whether Protestant or Papist by name, were, in point of fact, heathen savages, or not much better. I mentioned my plan of having a church, and also a catechism; then we had a great deal of questioning about the kind of it. I expounded my *catholic* sentiments and views. One member of the Committee asked me whether it would be such as Roman Catholics would agree to. I must have put my answer in a sort of ludicrous light, for the Duke of Argyll, who was behind me, got out with a *guffaw*; I



forget the exact expressions—but my reply was to the effect that the Roman Catholics would agree to it, for it would contain all the truth that they had, and that they would not, for it would contain none of their superadded errors. Another asked whether it would be such as Jews or Unitarians would agree to. I said, certainly not. Then I gave them a brief *epitome* of the grand doctrines of the Gospel, showing them that it would be a *Christian* catechism, to which, of course, those parties could not agree. Sir John Pakington, Sidney Herbert, Monckton Milnes (the *littérateur*), with the chairman, were my principal catechisers.

“Signor Nicolini called here, and walked as far as Stafford House with me. I forgot, ere I left him, the name of this street, so asked him; he told me, and laughed much at my oblivion. I was afraid I would forget it again; and so it happened; for, on leaving, I began to think, Where did I live? I knew it was a street close by St. James’s Street, but I could not recall it; tried and tried it. What was I to do? Thought of going back, explaining my dilemma, and taking refuge in Stafford House all night! At length applied to a policeman, told him how I was non-plussed. He answered most discreetly, seeing I was as sober as a teetotaler; named a number of streets. No, these were not the thing. At length out came Bury Street. ‘Ah!’ said I, ‘that’s it,’ thanked him, and bade good night.” (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

In his evidence, Dr. Guthrie not only entered into a full explanation of the working of the Original Ragged School, but indicated clearly both the kind of pecuniary help which he desiderated from Government, and what legislative assistance was needed to secure the attendance at such schools of the children who needed them most. We subjoin a portion of his evidence:—

879. *Mr. Monckton Milnes.* You do not think that your scheme, or any other scheme which would give a refuge to destitute children, gives any direct encouragement to parents to leave their children destitute?

*Rev. Dr. Guthrie.* I am thoroughly convinced it does not. It is said that there are some savages who cannot count more



than ten, the number of their fingers;—I believe the mass of these people never look ten hours before them; they have neither forethought nor reflection.

898. *Sir John Pakington.* What is your system of religious teaching in the school; is it according to the Presbyterian form of worship?

No; I am happy to say that it is based on broad Catholic principles; we have Episcopalians, Established Church, Free Church, United Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists on the committee of management. In fact, I have had a good deal to do with it myself, and I took special care that all the different religious denominations should be represented on the committee of management; and so anxious are we to avoid anything like sectarianism in the management of our school, that we do not even teach the Catechism that is in use in all the parish schools in Scotland—in ninety-nine out of one hundred of the other schools.

899. Suppose the case of a child who had left your school after eight years' teaching in it, he would be unable to answer what section of Christians he belonged to?

Perfectly so; he would be able just to say that he was a Christian.

400. If he could not say what denomination of Christians in the country he belonged to, would he be able to say whether he was a Protestant or a Roman Catholic?

That would depend upon himself: we teach the Bible without ever touching upon that subject.

402. *Mr. M. Milnes.* Would it be probable that if the children to whom you are alluding had remained in the state in which they were, and had not gone to your school, they would, when they came to a mature age, have been able to tell what Christian denomination they belonged to?

They would most certainly have been able to say, as I believe the celebrated Grimaldi put on his door on one occasion, "No religion at all."

412. *Sir J. Pakington.* What is your religious teaching now?

Our religious teaching is based on the Word of God.

418. What does it consist of?

They read through the Bible regularly. To begin at the beginning, they are taught to say grace at meat, and to return thanks after meat; then they receive oral instruction from the Bible in the main doctrines of Christianity, man's fallen state, the doctrine of the Trinity, the atonement, sanctification by the Spirit of God, justification through the righteousness of



Christ,—in point of fact the contents of a Catechism, without the formal appearance of a Catechism; then they read so many chapters in the Bible every day, they are examined upon these, and they commit passages of Scripture to memory and repeat them; so many passages every day.

414. By whom is that instruction given, and those examinations made?

By the teachers.

415. Not by ministers of religion?

No; we are so careful to avoid sectarian differences, that we have no minister of religion on the acting committee, with the exception of myself: I am a sort of *ex-officio* member, without the name.

The case being mentioned of children who had fallen into criminal habits:—

461. *Sir J. Pakington*. In fact they will not stay with you? They will not; and for that very reason, we want, by law, to have the power of compelling the attendance of those children at school.

498. *Chairman (Mr. Baines)*. You are of opinion that there is a great want of further provision of this kind in Edinburgh?

Very great want; even in Edinburgh, which is one of the best supplied, there are not above a third of the children provided for.

499. And the case is *à fortiori* as to other towns?

Yes.

500. What is the practical suggestion which you would make upon this head?

The practical suggestion that I would make is, not that the Government should come forward and supersede our local efforts; I should look upon that as a great calamity; I think that parties in the locality manage such schools as these better than they could be managed through a central Board here in London, and through Government agency. I think, too, that it is better for the children; because we get ladies and gentlemen connected with the management of these schools to take a special interest in the children themselves, and to take them by the hand. For instance, by way of illustration, there are a number of families of the higher and wealthier classes in Scotland who pay so much a year for keeping so many children in the school, and they take an interest in their future welfare. Independently of that, I think it is a great benefit to us in the



locality to have this good work to do ; therefore I should look upon it as a very injurious system to put the Ragged Schools under the sole management of the Government. I do not wish the Government to supersede our efforts ; what I wish the State to do is, to supplement them.

512. *Chairman.* You want to have the burden divided, so that the State should bear a part, and that the other part should be borne by voluntary zeal ?

Yes ; and that the State should not supersede us, but supplement us.

518. *Mr. Sidney Herbert.* You retaining the control of the schools ?

Under Government inspection ; so that the Government shall have the power to withdraw the grant whenever they choose, if they are not satisfied.

557. Do you intend to make a separation between children committed for offences, and the rest of the children in the school ?

We do not find at all any necessity for a separate establishment for children committed for offences, if it is the first offence ; and it so happens that the children do not look down upon any child who is sent to the school by a magistrate for the first offence. But I should think it necessary that a child who had been convicted of two or three offences should be in a separate establishment from the others in the Ragged School ; for we have found the influence of what we call a thorough juvenile offender very pernicious, and we are very unwilling to receive them.

558. Then do you contemplate having two establishments ?

What I contemplate is, first, a Ragged School, for the purpose of catching children before they reach prison ; and then a Reformatory School, for the purpose of telling upon the children who have already become criminals. If any State institution is established, I think that there should be two such schools.

570. In fact, you would have a Ragged School in order to anticipate and prevent crime, and you would have another school that would be a reformed and improved sort of prison for children ?

Just so ; one preventive and the other reformatory. I think the first the most important—the preventive.

577. Would you proceed against the parent to recover the cost of the maintenance of the child equally in both schools ?

I would hold that the State is bound in its own defence to take measures to secure that no child should grow up a nuisance



to society ; and the party that ought to bear the responsibility should be the parent.

578. *Mr. Tufnell.* Are there many parents who pay for the support of their children in your schools ?

There are a few in Dundee. In Edinburgh there are very few.

579. *Mr. S. Herbert.* Are there many that ought to pay ?

There are a number, but not very many ; most of them are utterly dissipated. I believe if there was a white slave-market in Edinburgh they would sell their children for drink.

591. *Mr. Adderley.* Do you suppose that a great number of those children are led into crime by actual destitution ?

There is no doubt about it—that poverty being often brought on by the dissipated habits of the parents. One of the greatest curses which we have in our country, and which, as long as it exists, will increase exceedingly the need of Ragged Schools, is the quantity of dram-shops that we have in the large towns in Scotland, and the great extent of drinking.

The Committee reported on the 28th of June, first, that Reformatories, to be instituted and supported entirely at the public expense, ought to be established ; and, second, that the existing Ragged Industrial (or preventive) Schools ought not any longer to be excluded from the aid of the National Grant, under the distribution of the Committee of Council for Education. Encouraged by this Report, the supporters of Ragged Schools continued to press their claims upon Government. Many causes seemed to warrant the hope of a favourable reply. Thus the Duke of Argyll writes:—

“ CLEVELAND, August 1st, 1853.

“ MY DEAR DR. GUTHRIE,— . . . There is no danger of the great social question now escaping attention. Transportation is virtually at an end, and the public attention, from motives of self-preservation, is now being earnestly directed to the safest mode of dealing with our criminals at home. Out of evil, at least out of circumstances of great difficulty and embarrassment, is coming this great good. I doubt whether, without



this urgent necessity, the reformation of juvenile delinquents would not have been a postponed and disputed question for some years longer. But now it is a sheer necessity, and that, you know, is the mother of invention. This ought to be a Government subject."

In little more than a year after the date of this letter, two Acts were passed dealing with the whole subject. The one, commonly called "Lord Palmerston's Act," applied to the case of *criminal* children, and was applicable both to England and Scotland; the other, introduced by Dr. Guthrie's early friend (see Autobiography, page 208), was named "Dunlop's Act," and dealt with *vagrant* children. This latter measure applied to Scotland alone.

Hitherto, if a magistrate followed the strict letter of the law, he had no alternative but to commit the youngest child, if convicted of the most petty theft, to jail. Now, by Lord Palmerston's Act, power was given to the magistrates to send that child, if under the age of sixteen, to a Reformatory School. By Mr. Dunlop's Act, again, without any necessity for previous imprisonment, powers were conferred upon magistrates to commit to a certified Industrial School, and to detain there for five years, "any young person, apparently under the age of fourteen years, *found begging, or not having any home or settled place of abode or proper guardianship, and having no visible means of subsistence found wandering*, though not charged with any actual offence." Under both Acts, powers were given to enforce partial payment from the parents of "committed" children.



These measures were keenly canvassed in their passage through Parliament. Mr. Dunlop's Bill, especially, encountered the strenuous opposition of the Irish Roman Catholic members; Mr. Lucas, the member for Meath, going so far as to say that, "It was because he believed that the moral nature of the children sent to such institutions as that presided over by Dr. Guthrie would be more perverted than it would be if they were left on the streets, that he opposed the bill."\* That their opposition proved fruitless was due, in large measure, to the extraordinary success which the already existing Ragged Schools had achieved.

"We owe many thanks to Mr. Dunlop," said the Duke of Argyll at the annual meeting of Dr. Guthrie's School, in Edinburgh, in 1857, "for his exertions in this cause; but I believe the great merit of that Act is due to those who established these schools on the voluntary principle, and who have conducted them with such great success. I will venture, without hesitation, to affirm that if the duty of Mr. Dunlop had been, not merely to go to Parliament, saying, 'Here are schools already existing, the effect of which has been abundantly proved in past years;' but if it had been his duty to go to Parliament to devise schools for educating the vagrant and criminal children, he would have been utterly unable to get any law on the subject passed. He would have been met with all the difficulties which have attended every proposal for a general scheme of education. He would have been asked, What is the religious principle on which you intend to educate these children? What are the rules which you intend to lay down in the schools to which you are to send children by force of law? But Mr. Dunlop was able to go to the House of Commons and say, 'You have nothing to do with founding schools; they are founded for you, and all that I ask is, that when children have been found in a vagrant condition, and likely to perpetrate crime, it shall be in the power of the

\* *Hansard*, vol. cxxxiv., page 1481.



magistrate, instead of sending them, as formerly, to prison, to send them to these schools.'"

While the requisite legislation had thus been obtained, the pecuniary aid for which Dr. Guthrie had asked was also in fair measure afforded. By Minute of the Privy Council of 2nd June, 1856, a capitation grant of 50s. a year was allowed for every child in the certified Industrial Schools, whether committed by magistrates or not.

The publication of that Minute of Privy Council gave a great impetus to the Ragged School movement throughout Great Britain. The year 1856, indeed, might almost be called its new starting point. Schools already in existence proceeded to enlarge their sphere of operations, and schools were started in new centres of population, so that the cause seemed to have received a permanent impulse. It was, therefore, with surprise and alarm that the announcement of the recall of that Minute was received; and when, on 31st December, 1857, the Privy Council issued a new Minute, the worst fears of the friends of Ragged Schools were found to be realised.

"I do not wish to speak evil of dignities," were Dr. Guthrie's words, "but there are some things in respect of which it is difficult to keep one's temper, and this is one of them. We have leaned on a broken reed. For a brief period, in answer to importunity like the widow's, we got fifty shillings a year for every child of the abandoned classes trained within our school—only one-third of the cost. But now, and all in a day, these fifty shillings have been reduced to five. Five shillings in the year comes to about half a farthing in the day; and one half-farthing per day is the encouragement and help we



get toward saving a hapless, helpless creature from crime, the prison, the hangman! Munificent donation!

"Incredible mockery as this seems, such is the fact. I am not aware that there is anything to match it in any other department of public affairs. Its injustice and folly are still more plainly brought out by the contrast between the liberality shown to those institutions which attempt to reform the child who has committed crime, and the niggardliness dealt out to such institutions as ours, that, reckoning prevention better than cure, seek to destroy crime in the very bud. To the man who, like a fool, postpones education till the child falls into crime, and is brought out of the gaol to school, the Government gives *one shilling* per day; and to the far wiser man who, catching the child, so to speak, on its way to the prison, by education destroys crime in the egg and germ, the Government grants but *one half-farthing* per day. What a monstrous state of matters!

"One reason the Government give for withdrawing the grant is that they want to check an abuse of the public money. No one can be more clear than I am for having a check to prevent an abuse of the public money, but it is marvellous to me that the Government don't see that they have a sufficient check under the former Act. Why, Government liberality to our Ragged School is little more than £600, and the expense of the school over and above that amounts in all to £2,262. Has not the Government, then, a very good check, when, for every pound that they give, the supporters of the school must pay two?

"But another reason for what the Government has done is, I believe, because they have got alarmed at the amount of money voted, year by year, by the House Commons for the interests of education in this country. A number of years ago it only amounted to £60,000, but now it has increased to about £500,000. That is a large sum; but what a much larger sum is spent in the punishment of crime! And why, if there must be a retrenchment, begin with the Ragged School?"

As might be expected, steps were at once taken, both by individual Ragged School Committees and by combined action, to prevail on the Privy Council to reconsider the matter, and restore the former grant. Dr. Guthrie accompanied one of the deputations sent to London for



this end, and thus describes an interview with the Right Hon. C. B. Adderley, Vice-President of the Committee of Privy Council on Education.

"MANCHESTER, March 18th, 1859.

"We met in a hotel close by Downing Street an hour before the time fixed with Adderley. Lord Grosvenor \* came up and claimed acquaintance with me, and I was introduced to a lot of English members whom I did not know. Besides Ragged School directors, from various towns in England as well as Scotland, we mustered some twenty-one members of Parliament. At the preliminary meeting they moved me into the chair. The plan of battle was then arranged, and the matters that we were to press on the Government discussed. They appointed me to take the lead and lay the subject before Adderley, and they would supplement. Mr. Black was fixed on to introduce the deputation.

"Well, away we set, up the street like a column of soldiers, and entered the Treasury buildings. The room in which we were received was crowded to the door. I stood at the table beside Mr. Adderley. I had prepared nothing beyond marking down and arranging points to speak to. I believe I got quite animated, and, instead of addressing Adderley, found myself repeatedly addressing the deputation! I was carried into this by their general cries of 'hear, hear,' which gave it something of the air and aspect of an oration in the Music Hall. I judge from what others of them said, in afterwards pressing the matter on Adderley, that they are not accustomed to such orations on such occasions. Mr. Black, too, got quite animated in pressing our claims, and so was the member for Newcastle. It had a good deal of the character of what in America they call an *Indignation Meeting*.

"Notwithstanding our fever and vehemence, Adderley fought very shy; and I should not wonder though we have to bring the wrong for redress before Parliament. I had a long talk afterwards, when we returned to the House after dinner, with A. Kinnaird and Cowper † (the latter, Palmerston's stepson). The deed was done when he was Vice-President of the Committee of Privy Council. I think I convinced him (Mr. Kinnaird was convinced before) that the thing must be undone;

\* Now Duke of Westminster.

† Now Mr. Cowper-Temple.



and they left me to talk with Adderley *anent* the matter, and try to get the Government to yield." (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

It was shortly after this that Dr. Guthrie issued his third Plea for Ragged Schools. This third Plea was bound up with the two former, and the volume entitled, "Seed Time and Harvest of Ragged Schools." It was reviewed in the *Times* of 28th September, 1860, from whose notice we transfer one or two sentences:—

"Dr. Guthrie is the greatest of our pulpit orators, and those who have never heard him will probably obtain a better idea of his wonderful eloquence from his work on Ragged Schools than from his published sermons. Several years ago he issued two pamphlets, which he has now followed up by a third, on behalf of these institutions. They are the most finished of his compositions, and are well worthy of his fame. It is impossible to read them unmoved. The writer is himself under the influence of a mastering passion, and he carries his readers along with him, by the help of a strong, clear style and a boundless store of illustrations. . . . We are inclined almost to rank him as the greatest living master of the pathetic."

In the end of 1860, "Dunlop's Act" was repealed, and Government introduced what was known as the "Industrial Schools Act," which became law on 7th August, 1861. By the operation of this Act, the reduced capitation grant of five shillings per annum was altogether withdrawn, and those children in Ragged Industrial Schools, *who had not been committed by a magistrate*, ceased to receive any assistance whatever. On the other hand, the allowance for "*committed*" children was materially increased; but, then, from their number (in proportion to the whole number of children in attendance being comparatively small, Dr. Guthrie's school, &



others in like proportion, were serious losers. By the Privy Council Report for 1861, it appeared that of the 6,172 children in the Ragged Schools of the country, only 242 had been committed by magistrates, either as criminal or vagrant, leaving 5,930 who now wholly ceased to receive any support or assistance from the State.

An opportunity for an influential protest soon occurred. In 1860 the Social Science Association held their annual meeting in Glasgow, at which both Sheriff Watson, the founder of Ragged Schools in Scotland, and Dr. Guthrie, their chief advocate, were present. The proceedings were opened by the President, Lord Brougham (then eighty-two years of age), in the course of whose address a pointed reference was made to the subject which had specially induced Dr. Guthrie's attendance at the Association.

"The refusal," said Lord Brougham, "to assist in preventing pauperism and crime, by diligently educating and training the class of children from whom vagrants and criminals are bred, is, perhaps, one of the greatest economical, let us rather say social, mistakes ever committed. It is an abdication of the most imperative duties of a State—that of helping those who cannot help themselves—as well as the self-destructive economy, the gross impolicy of withholding a little outlay, in schooling, from those on whom it must afterwards spend largely in the way of gaols and workhouses."

Dr. Guthrie spoke in the "Punishment and Reformation Section." He denounced what he regarded as the unjust treatment his poor young clients were receiving at the hands of those who held the State's purse-strings; but, in the midst of all his earnestness, his humour



breaks out as usual:—"Mr. Lowe, who had declined to give another farthing from the Privy Council, proposes to throw us on the Home Office, and with that proposition I find no fault—seeing that we may say with the Irishman, who, on being asked by the Commissioners sitting on the state of Ireland, why he and his countrymen, when so poor as they represented themselves to be, married so early, said, 'Sor, we think we may be better, and are sure we cannot be worse!'"

"September 29th, 1860.

"We have had a very interesting time of it. I was asked one morning to a breakfast given by a Glasgow club to Sir John Lawrence.\* We had much interesting conversation. He is a great and earnestly good man, one who, all say, should be made Governor-General of India. He agrees with me entirely in my views as to the army, and he and Arthur Kinnaird urged me to publish on the subject.

"We had a grand discussion on National Education. Sir J. K. Shuttleworth very kindly introduced himself to me, and asked me to speak. He delivered a most noble address, and it was very interesting to see Lord Brougham—to whom Kinnaird introduced me—sitting in such company, and presiding, while Shuttleworth and Kinnaird opened three days with thoroughly religious addresses.

"On the day I read my paper on Ragged School claims for Government aid, I had a great audience; and, though the paper was only some quarter of an hour long, I made it, with interlarding, three-quarters. It was very funny (though I did not know it till I was done), that while I was laying my *tauts* on the back of the Government, one of the ministers was at my side, in the Hon. Mr. Cowper."

"EDINBURGH, October 1st, 1860.

"MY DEAR MR. LOGAN,†—. . . I hope those meetings which have been held in Glasgow will result in much good; they are full of promise. It was a wonderful thing to see yon old man,

\* Now Lord Lawrence.

† Author of the "Moral Statistics of Glasgow."



Brougham ; and it was pleasant to see how, in his old age, he was breathing a purer atmosphere than in the days of his youth. It was fine to see him sitting under the address of Sir J. K. Shuttleworth, while the latter was delivering himself of so many Christian sentiments, and pronouncing the body 'the temple of the Holy Ghost.' I hope Brougham will get good to himself. How marvellous to see that his sun, so far down the sky, is brilliant and clear as ever !

" With best thanks and great esteem,

" Yours sincerely,

" THOMAS GUTHRIE."

A public meeting was convened in Edinburgh in November, 1860, to consider what steps should be taken to meet the serious deficit of £700 in the funds for the year, of the Original Ragged School, caused by the withdrawal of the Government grant for non-committed children. On that occasion, Dr. Norman MacLeod felicitously exposed the mistaken policy of giving aid largely to Reformatories which received children only after they had become criminals, while withholding it from Ragged Schools, whose aim was to save them from being criminals at all :—"It is monstrous that Government, who would not give sixpence to save a man's leg, would quite willingly give twenty pounds for a wooden one after the leg was taken off!" \*

"What I wish the public to understand," said Dr. Guthrie in concluding his appeal, "is this,—you must either help us in our present extremity, or we must cast seventy of these poor children overboard. Now, who is to select these

\* Dr. Guthrie had invited Dr. MacLeod to dinner after that meeting on behalf of the "City Arabs." In reply, Dr. MacLeod wrote, "I thank you for your kind invitation to a place in your tent. I would rejoice to eat salt with the Arab Chiefs you mention, or with one only, my old and esteemed friend Dr. Hanna."



victims? I will not do it. I sympathize with Hagar, when, after doing her utmost to sustain her son, she withdrew, not choosing to see him die. It will be a black day for Edinburgh when these children are cast into the streets. God says, 'Room in heaven for the guilty;' here they cry, 'Room in the prison for the innocent;' and when these poor creatures have gone their horrid march from our blessed school to yon dreary cells, let them put upon the door of the prison, 'Under the patronage of the Privy Council.'

\* \* \* \* \*

"I have been three times at Downing Street, and it is a shocking cold place. I have seen a bunch of grapes put into a well, and, when you took it out, instead of a bunch of grapes it was a bunch of stones. There are such things as petrifying wells, and I have seen a kind good-hearted man go into office in Downing Street, and the next time I saw him he was as hard as a stone.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I will blush for my country and for Protestantism if these poor children are not fully cared for. I will be ashamed to look in the face of a poor Papist Irishman whom I saw in a house in the Cowgate some years ago. When I asked if one of the children, a fair-haired lassie, was his, he said, 'Oh, no, plaze your riv'rence, she's nothing of the kind; but her father and mother died next door, and she had not a creature in the wide world to care for her; so, though I had plinty childer of my own, I said to Mary, we'll take her in,—and, plaze your riv'rence, we've never missed the lassie's bit o' food.' Now, I say to you, you'll never miss the 'bit of food' of these children. The alternative is, for these boys, vice or virtue; for these girls, purity or prostitution."

At the subsequent annual meeting of the Charity he thankfully related the result of that appeal:—"We asked £700, and, to the everlasting honour of the people of Edinburgh, we got £2,200." Two items in this amount particularly gratified Dr. Guthrie. One, a sum of £157, was raised entirely by domestic servants in Edinburgh; the history of the other he thus detailed—



To THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

"EDINBURGH, April 6th, 1862.

"On being invited last year to Biggar Fair, to help those who sought (by substituting tea for toddy, and the attractions of a public meeting for those of the public-house) to prevent the evils incident to such great gatherings, I went,—deeming nothing beneath the dignity of a servant of Christ which was calculated to keep men and women from the ways of sin. The scheme was a great success. This year, as an additional attraction, our Ragged School musical band was taken out, and fifes, drums, and bugles entered Biggar, on a fine spring morning, playing the march of new and better times. It was a gala day to our poor boys; their shining faces were radiant with delight. It was a sight worth seeing, and would have made a capital picture:—our dozen or fourteen little fellows standing in front of the Corn Exchange, converted for that day into a temperance hotel; around, a great and eager throng formed in circles—the first, of children about the height of our band; the second, of 'haffins,' boys and girls in their *braws* for the market; the third, of stout lads and blooming lasses; and behind these, fathers and mothers, and patriarchs of the hills, men and women with heads as grey as their own mountain mists.

"When the sorrows of these children are told in Music and City Halls, I often see pity glistening in the eyes of women, who go home and send me money in letters, sealed, some with coronets, some with thimbles; but I never saw anything more beautiful than the kindness which beamed in the countenances of these honest country people, as they gazed over each other's heads on the group of little fellows whom, with God's blessing, we had rescued from hunger and cruelty, and crime and death. A kind heart is a jewel, and you expect to see it in woman; but hands there, that might have felled an ox, were lifted to brush off the tear that silently rolled down the cheeks of stout and stalwart men.

"The awakening of such gentle feelings in these people was good for them, and it also proved good for us; for the overflowing of kindness, like that of the waters of the Nile, always leaves a blessing behind it. I had no doubt it would make their hearts softer and better; still, I had no expectation of reaping such an early and abundant harvest as I write this letter gratefully to acknowledge. In my address at the public meeting on the 'fair' day, I said to the crowds that thronged the church and left the public-houses all but empty, that if



they felt inclined to send us any aid, I would gratefully accept it; \* adding, half jocosely, half seriously, in the common style of beggars, that the smallest donation would be thankfully received. How great my astonishment to receive, and my pleasure to report, the following sums . . . . making £77 19s. 8d. May this example lead others to go and do likewise! The Christian kindness which prompted this gift will ever impart a beauty in my eyes to the hills and dales of that neighbourhood more splendid than when they are bathed in the glories of a golden sunset."

On the 23rd of January, 1861, a Conference of the friends of Ragged Schools was summoned to meet at Birmingham, under the presidency of Sir John Pakington,† who had all along headed the party in the House of Commons which desired to see these schools receive an increase of State aid. On that occasion Dr. Guthrie moved the second resolution, to the effect "That neglected and destitute children constitute a very large class of the community, yet that no educational aid is given for their education, from the Parliamentary grant, comparable to that which is given to such classes of schools as already receive Government assistance."

\* Few letters he ever received gratified him more than the following, which he read at one of the annual meetings of the Ragged School:—

" —————, *January 2nd, 1860.*

"SIR,—I feel a good deal ashamed in writing you these few lines as I am in the humbler spear of life and you are so high. but I have been reading your Boock of late, the City its Sins and its Sorrows, and I was so much struck, that I have sent you these 10 shillings for the Ragged Schools.

"I am a poor farm servant and it is all that I can spare at present as I have a widow mother to support and I am the one son. I do not want my name down in any of the records.—Your sincere well wisher for your scheams,  
" —————."

† Now Lord Hampton.



For five years longer, however, the state of matters remained unchanged. At length, in 1866, a new "Industrial Schools Act" was passed, whereby these institutions were placed upon their present footing. By means of this Act, increased facilities are given to magistrates for committing children accused of petty thefts, as well as *vagrant children* not accused of any actual crime; and thus, through the increased number of "committed" children, Ragged Schools receive a proportionally larger annual allowance from Government than they ever formerly enjoyed.\*

Dr. Guthrie was naturally thankful for this; but there still existed a mass of ignorant, uncared for, destitute children, whom none of all these legislative enactments reached. Accordingly he wrote, in the same year which saw the passing of the Industrial Schools Act, to the late Dean Ramsay—

"MOSSFENNAN, RACHAN MILL, December 15th, 1866.

"MY DEAR MR. DEAN,—. . . The most important view which I take of our position and action is that we are the pioneers of a great movement; that we are and have been carrying on a series of experiments for the purpose of meeting our social evils, which, if successful, will force the principles and plans we advocate into universal favour and application. Let our schools be amply supplied with funds and wrought with the highest vigour, and ere long we will compel the country to apply on the broadest scale, and in a great measure at the public expense, what has proved the best and kindest and cheapest and most Christian code for its misery and crime."

The true solution of the problem Dr. Guthrie looked

\* For example, in 1873, out of 241 children in the Edinburgh Original Ragged Schools, 111 had been "committed" by magistrates, and for these £1,420 was paid by Government to the funds of the school.



for in a National Education measure, containing a compulsory clause :—

"There is no prospect in the distant horizon," he said in 1866, "that I rejoice in more than in this, that in the course of less perhaps than another quarter of a century this country will declare by the voice of Parliament that no child within the shores of Britain shall be allowed to grow up without a good, useful education. But here we are in the meantime; we have hundreds of children in this town for whom, at the present moment, no provision is made, and, as you know, the object of the Ragged Schools is to meet the case at present, until society takes it up on a large and proper scale."

Two years thereafter, it had become plain that the legislation he desiderated was nearer at hand than he had ventured to believe. "We are on the eve of a great change in this country," were his words in 1868. "We have been driving over a dark, rough sea; we have been battling with tempest and difficulties. Although I am no prophet, or prophet's son, I see, within a very short time, a system of education established throughout the whole of this country, that will not shut up the Ragged Schools, but will open up many a Ragged School, and embrace the whole children of the country."

At length, by the passing of the Scotch Education Act of 1872, the "great change" to which Dr. Guthrie thus alluded was at least inaugurated. Under that Act, School Boards are empowered to establish Industrial Schools for "committed" children; but, for the large class, equally necessitous, whom magistrates cannot commit, no provision is made. As yet (1875) School Boards have not chosen to exercise even the limited powers thus con-



ferred upon them; and the existing Ragged School organization is, therefore, as necessary now as before. It was in view of the uncertain future of his own school that Dr. Guthrie wrote on 31st December 1872 :—

“ Will the friends of those that are ‘ ready to perish ’—of poor, ragged, starved, emaciated, ignorant, and neglected children—allow me from my sick-bed to close the year with what will probably be my closing plea on behalf of the Edinburgh Original Ragged School ?

\* \* \* \* \*

“ This Education Act, whereby the Local Boards are obliged to look after and provide for the education of every child within their bounds, will place our Ragged Schools in a new position, but not render them or their Christian machinery less necessary than before. Local Boards, however well constituted, and the ordinary teachers of schools can never supply the place of those Christian men and women who, as directors, visitors, managers, and teachers in our Ragged Schools, are *in loco parentis*—in room of kind Christian parents—to those children,—orphans, or worse than orphans.

“ I hope some arrangement will be come to between the Local Boards and our Ragged Schools, whereby, while the State shall sweep all neglected children into these schools and compel parents to pay for them—in any case, laying the burden of maintaining them more equally on the shoulders of the public—they may continue to be managed under those same moral and religious influences in which they had their origin, and to which they have chiefly owed their remarkable success.”

From 1847 onwards, Dr. Guthrie's name became widely associated with Ragged Schools and all kindred institutions. He visited many chief towns both of England and his native country, to plead a cause which lay very near his heart. On 6th February, 1855, he lectured on this subject for the London Young Men's Christian Association to an audience which filled



every corner of Exeter Hall. His address on that occasion has been called "the high-water mark of his powerful and pathetic oratory."

"BIRKENHEAD, 4, ST. AIDAN'S TERRACE, June 11th, 1859.

"Yesterday we visited the *Akbar*, under the wing and guidance of Mr. Brougham, who is at the head of the Bankruptcy Court here, and who takes a great interest in the work carried on in that ship.\* She is an old man-of-war, and was given by the Government as a sort of floating Ragged School—or rather Reformatory School—boys convicted of offences under Lord Palmerston's Act being sent there to be trained for seamen. They get 7s. a week for each of these youths, so that, with a little additional aid, they are able to meet all expenses.

"Our party set off in a river steamer to Rock Ferry, where we expected to find boats from the *Akbar*, and were not disappointed. Two eight-oared barges were manned by ten boys each, all dressed alike, with sailor's cap, white trousers, blue dress trimmed with white, and on the breast, wrought in white, the word *Akbar*. They received us with 'tossed oars,' as they are called, and, so soon as we were seated, dropped on their benches, and at the word of command given by the *steersboy*, crack, all in time, went the oars, and away we went. We had not got half way across the water when the great ship that lay asleep on the river changed all of a moment,—an honour, as well as the *tossed oars*, they paid to me, corresponding to that they pay in the navy when an admiral comes on board. On the shrouds of each of the three masts you saw a hundred and fifty blue jackets and white trousers running up like cats or mice; some on reaching the first yards streamed along them; others held on and up to the second yards, and so many streamed along them; the rest held up and on still higher, till they had climbed to the higher yards, ranging themselves along these. So soon as we got on deck the boatswain piped the word of command, and down they came rattling at a rate which it frightened one to look at. I thought some of them would topple over into the water, or be squeezed to a pancake on the deck!

\* At a later date, Dr. Guthrie visited another of these "floating Ragged Schools," the *Mars*, when lying in the Tay, and on 10th January, 1870, spoke at a great meeting in the City Hall, Glasgow, held in connection with the Glasgow Foundry Boys' Religious Society and the Clyde training ship, *Cumberland*, in whose juvenile crew his friend Mr. Burns of Castle Wemyss takes a peculiar interest.



"We spent some two hours on board, and were deeply interested. The boys looked very healthy and happy; though not a few of them had the features of a sunken and degraded class, the effect produced by two or three generations of a low and brutal condition. I found below decks some two or three dozen with the teacher engaged in reading the Bible, and gave them a brief address, to which they were exceedingly attentive. The Chaplain is a jewel of a man, so affectionate and sensible, and vigorous and enthusiastic. He is an ordained clergyman of the Church of England.

"We saw the boys put through a number of their manœuvres. They set sails and furled them, and it was amazing to see, after the signal was given, how rapidly they climbed up, and up, and still up, till they were on the highest yard, lying over it and unloosening the rolled-up sail. Nor was I least entertained or interested to see the worthy grey-haired commander, Captain Wake, renew the feats and vigour of his youth. He is, meanwhile, a volunteer substitute for Captain Fenwick, their regular commander, and is a delightful specimen of a naval officer as well as a Christian philanthropist. He mentioned a gratifying fact,—that it was my 'Plea' which first led him to take an interest in the cause of these outcasts." (*To his son Patrick.*)

"LONDON, *April 4th*, 1861.

"Yesterday I had, in the shape of a bit of paper, a million sterling in my hand, and was in a room where I stood among forty millions of money. I came forth from these treasuries of the Bank of England to see two boys at its gates with arms and legs bare, and just some rags round their foul and emaciated bodies. Wealth and Want, Repletion and Starvation, side by side! 'There is something rotten,' said Hamlet, 'in the state of Denmark.' But I say there is much rotten in the state of England, and I shall tell them so at Hanbury's meeting on Tuesday." (*To Miss M. E. Lockhart.*)

During the following week he made a special pilgrimage, for old John Pounds' sake, to Portsmouth.

"*April 13th*, 1861.

"We went through the *Victory* and saw the cockpit, three stories below the quarter-deck, where Nelson expired. This was interesting, but to me it was more interesting still, when we left scenes associated with Nelson and his battles,



to go away to an old-fashioned humble street, and in a small shop, in a two-storied house, built of wood, not above seven feet broad and some fifteen long, to stand on the scene of John Pounds' labours. He would have, sometimes, thirty or forty boys there; the place so crowded with children (whom he was saving from ruin without fee or reward, and, indeed, long without the notice or praise of any man), that they occasionally sat outside on the street. It was the humble birthplace of a great scheme. Next to what was his shop, now lives his nephew, who was brought up by John. He is Pounds also by name, and also by trade a cobbler or shoemaker. We went and had a long talk with him, and I made your mother buy a pair of shoes. He told us some interesting things about the old man. . . . He had often said to his nephew that, if it pleased God, he hoped '*to drop like a bird from its perch.*' And so it happened; for he died all in a moment." (*To his daughter Clementina.*)

"10, UPPER GROSVENOR STREET, LONDON, April 17th, 1861.

"Last night we drove off to Willis's Rooms—a grand scene. In the lower room the various Ragged Schools and Refuges were represented by one or two inmates from each, engaged in their different works. Up-stairs was a brilliant hall, round the walls of half of it stalls with ladies—the middle and upper part crowded with a brilliant assembly of ladies and gentlemen in full dress—a divan at the upper end occupied by the Bishop of London, Earl Grey, Vice-Chancellor Napier, and myself. Burgess of Chelsea opened by prayer, and all at once the Bishop threw me in. I expected others to begin, but had to commence, and no one else spoke. I intended to be short, but gave them a full dose of it. Lord Shaftesbury was with us about the middle of my address. I saw also Sir John Lawrence and some others whom I knew.

"This morning I went to call on the great and good Dr. Lushington, who wished to see me, and who was most gracious and kind. He was the coadjutor of Wilberforce. He became a member of the House of Commons in 1806—three years after I was born; sat then with a Mr. Hussey, who had been a member of the House in the reign of George II. He spoke much of the change for the better in our country since his early days.

"Mr. Gladstone and our morning party had much interesting talk about politics, divinity, colleges, Ragged Schools, &c., &c. He was vexed he had not seen me before we went to Salisbury,



as he would have given me a letter to the Bishop. I have secured his influence with Sir George Lewis not to oppose Northcote's motion in the House of Commons for a Committee on the working of Ragged Schools." (*To his daughter Clementina.*)

"INCHGRUNDLE, LOCHLEE, June 19th, 1861.

"I may have to go to London to be examined by Sir Stafford Northcote's committee. The ministry, or, rather, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, was to oppose his motion for a committee of inquiry as to Industrial Feeding Schools. I spoke both to the Chancellor (Gladstone) and to the Duke of Argyll on the subject. They saw no reason for opposing it. Mr. Black put forth all his activities to raise a force sufficient to out-vote Lewis. He got me to write a letter on the subject, printed a part of it, and circulated it among the M.P.'s." (*To Miss M. E. Lockhart.*)

In August of the same year, 1861, Dr. Guthrie was in Geneva at the General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance; and there, before an audience of many nationalities, enlarged on his favourite department of Christian philanthropy. "Many thanks," wrote the Rev. Dr. Macduff of Glasgow, who was present on that occasion, "for your Geneva speech; it stirred a chord in many hearts. I wish that old John Calvin had heard it. Ragged Schools would have had a chapter in the 'Institutes!'" Various other visits to the Continent he turned to a similar account. He spent a long day in the spring of 1864 at the famous French Reformatory of Mettray, near Tours, of which he had frequently heard and read; and when in Amsterdam, in 1867, he once more addressed a General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance on the reclamation of destitute and criminal children.



Ever and anon he found that the arguments and appeals of his "Plea" were bearing fruit in unexpected quarters, sometimes far beyond the limits of Great Britain. We find among his letters correspondence about a Ragged School in Jamaica; and the following letter from Mr. Smith, Governor of Edinburgh prison, presents an illustration still more striking of how far good seed may be wafted, or, as in this case, floated:—

"January 9th, 1865.

"MY DEAR DR. GUTHRIE,—I heard something the other day which I may not longer delay telling you, as I know that it will gladden your heart.

"In 1848 a gentleman, a merchant in Barbadoes, visited Scotland in the way of his business. He took out with him about £2,000 of goods, was wrecked on one of the West Indian Islands, and escaped only with his life. The only thing recovered was your 'Plea for Ragged Schools.' It was washed ashore, and his name and address being written on it, it was forwarded to him. It was handed about, and was the cause of a Ragged School movement in that far-off isle of the sea. All comment to you on this is, of course, needless. 'Verily *His judgments are a great deep.*'"

"One needs sometimes no common measure of grace," wrote Dr. Guthrie to Miss Mill in 1866, "not to be weary in well doing. Yet it is not '*successful*,' but '*good and faithful servant*,' that are the words of our Lord." The blessing of success was in his own case, however, largely superadded to the grace of faithfulness. For four-and-twenty years he was spared to see the fruit of his labour, as well as to enjoy the blessing of those who were ready to perish, and the affection of a grateful community:—



"On Tuesday last," he told the Annual Meeting of his Schools in 1858, "I was in the West-end of the town when there came on one of the fiercest storms which has blown all this winter. My clothes were thoroughly soaked, and as I came round the south side of the Castle, I don't think I ever faced such a blast. When I got to Nicolson Street, I saw, standing on the flooded gutter, a little child, seven years of age, his thin, miserable clothes glazed with rain, and, while the storm pelted on his young head, raising his miserable song in the midst of the tempest. I felt indignant at the sight; my indignation burned against the monster of a father or mother who could send out an infant on such a day, and as I had no doubt for such a purpose—to get money (as I ascertained was the fact) to go and spend it in vice, instead of spending it on that poor infant. I stopped and gave him a little charity. I could not resist doing *that*, though contrary to my rule. I shall not forget his red emaciated hand when he opened it; it was trembling, and I found he had a halfpenny in it, poor thing. 'Go home, my boy,' I said to him, 'go home immediately;' upon which I heard a voice say, 'That's richt, sir, send him to Dr. Guthrie's Ragged Schule.' Whereupon I turned, and saw the speaker standing beside me. Buttoned close up to the throat, with a cap pulled over his brows, he had the appearance of a sober, well-conditioned mechanic. I could not resist saying to this man, whose whole heart was in the matter as much as mine, 'Friend, I am Dr. Guthrie.' You should have seen how luminous, though begrimed with smoke, the man's face became, and how he thrust out his horny hand and grasped mine—a compliment I accepted as from a duchess. All honour to the moral worth and honest kindness that glowed in the man's look, and that were felt in a grip like the squeeze of his own vice!"

As life advanced, he continued, as chairman of the Committee by whom the Original Ragged Schools were managed, to watch their progress with an interest that no one else could fully share. It was with thankfulness he read in 1872 the following Report from Mr. Smith, Governor of the prison:—"Contrasted with the state of matters in 1847, when the Original Ragged School



was started, there is now just *one* juvenile committed to prison for *six* at that time."

Since the day when Ragged Schools were first opened in Edinburgh, how many hundreds of children who were on the road to ruin have passed out of their doors with a knowledge of God's word, and fitted to lead creditable and happy lives! In the year 1867, careful inquiries were made with regard to the fate of sixty boys who had passed through the school, and with what result? Four of the sixty had fallen back—of whom one was in prison, and three were in reformatories—four others remained unaccounted for; but of the remaining fifty-six, two were in the army, two in the navy, while forty-eight were in Edinburgh as apprentices, their united earnings amounting to £700 a year. "That fact, alone," said Dr. Guthrie, "is a recommendation for Ragged Schools greater than any speech that could be made by the most eloquent orator." \*

The pecuniary saving effected to the country by these Schools can be shown in a manner equally striking. Since their establishment at least one thousand children have been sent out into respectable positions in the world. Suppose (and the number is probably far below what the actual result would have been) that but one-half of these children had become criminals: what then?

\* The Report of the Government Inspector (Rev. S. Turner), given in on December 31st, 1873, shows that in the Original Ragged School of Edinburgh, the proportion of children who have turned out well has been between 80 and 90 per cent. (*Scotsman*, Aug. 26th, 1874.)



"Since the expense of each criminal," to quote Dr. Guthrie's words, "on an average amounts to £300, the saving of five hundred children will eventually save the country the enormous sum of £150,000, after deducting all the expenses which the public, through our society, has incurred on their behalf!\*" Nor is this the whole pecuniary advantage which society has derived from our schools alone. These five hundred children, turned into useful, productive citizens, are a positive gain and profit to the country. Say that the net value of the labour of each is but £20 a year, and suppose that they live on an average as productive members of society not more than twenty years, what is the result? The result is this, that not only does the country save £150,000, but it gains by the life and industry of the whole number the enormous sum of £200,000."

When, in Switzerland, he visited the late Dr. Guggen-huhl's institution for the cure of *cretin* (fatuous) children, he was struck by the ingenious mode that benevolent man had adopted for showing at a glance the benefits of the institution. A series of duplicate photographs hung on the walls of his room, each pair presenting the same child at two different stages: the first, as the boy or girl was on entering the institution—the lineaments of humanity scarce recognisable; the second, after years of care and tuition, tidy in person, the countenance exhibiting a fair share of intelligence, a child fitted to go forth in quest of a livelihood. Dr. Guthrie delighted, after a somewhat similar fashion, to set forth in word-pictures the blessed change which came over many of his protégés, from the time of their being lifted "out of the

\* The Lord Advocate of Scotland stated at the Annual Meeting in 1852, when the Original Ragged School had been but five years in existence, that supposing the children, who had been rescued up to that date by the agency of the school, to have run an ordinary course of crime, they would have cost the country £64,800.



gutter," till at the end of their school training they were sent forth to fight their own way in the world. Here is such a duplicate:—

"I was up lately (at the Ramsay Lane School) and saw a child brought in from the police-office, a lean, withered creature of a girl, who had been picked up for some petty offence, and had been sent, not to prison, but to the Ragged Schools. She was dressed in an old tattered gown made for somebody a great deal bigger than herself, and it was curious to see her little withered face away deep in the hollow of a great black bonnet. Poor soul! it was plain she had never been in such a place before; she sat perfectly amazed, confounded, dumbfounded, immovable, as if she had been cut out of stone; the only thing about her that seemed to have life was her eyes, and they went continually rolling round and round in blank amaze. In fact, she had all the look of a new-caught hare! Yet in three weeks you could not have recognised that child, such a marvellous change do the allied powers of patience and porridge work."

It may not have been this same girl, but just such another, whom, after some years of kindly Christian training in these schools, he found in the house of his elder, Mr. George Duncan, and of whom he thus tells—

"O with what *goût* did I eat my dinner when I learned that that neat modest girl serving us had passed through our Ragged School! and that my friend had not only opened his heart and hand to our cause, but had opened his house to this poor child, where she had found a comfortable and Christian home. I say let others go and do likewise."

Nor did he offer an advice which he was not prepared to practise:—

"INCHBURDLE, LOCHLER, 1866.

"I have brought a Ragged School boy with me this year. I thought some five weeks here would be a great enjoyment for him, and that he would be helpful in the house, at an oar, and by the waterside in carrying the basket. He has been a great



pleasure to us, and is quite a favourite with the people here. A smarter, more courteous, every way finer boy I have not seen anywhere for many a long year and day. He is very docile, of quick memory, a capital reader, of a bright buoyant temperament, can swim like a trout, and already handles the oars like a Shetlander or a Polynesian. He is in great extasies when a trout of any respectability is caught—pronouncing it to be ‘a salmon!’” (*To Miss M. E. Lockhart.*)

Above all, it gladdened Dr. Guthrie’s heart to receive from time to time testimonies to the influence of his schools in the highest sense:—“We believe that we can trace the salvation of the souls of some of those children to the Ragged Schools; some of them have shown evidence of a decided change, not of outward conduct only, but of heart.” Letters now lie before us, written from Australia by girls who had been in the Edinburgh Ragged School, one too from a young soldier in Shorncliffe camp, that bear true and touching evidence to the influence of these schools on the eternal welfare of some of the scholars.

The more immediate advantages which others have reaped from them came constantly under the notice of their founder. The following illustration is no doubt an exceptional one, but none the less noteworthy:—

“I was present, at a graduation ceremonial in the University of Edinburgh, when there came forward to be ‘capped,’\* by the Chancellor, ministers as doctors of divinity, lawyers and *littérateurs* as doctors of law, others still as doctors of medicine, and lastly a number of fine-looking young men as masters of arts. Who was there, think you? I never was

\* The degree is conferred by touching the head of each graduate with an antique flat bonnet of black velvet.



so affected all my days. It took me by surprise, and, I am not ashamed to confess it, it brought the tears to my eyes, for I saw among those 'capped' that day, as master of arts, a youth who had been one of my Ragged School boys."

One of the happiest evenings of an unusually happy life was spent by him in December, 1856:—

"When constituents were giving banquets to their members, and joyous cities were feasting the heroes of the Russian war, we resolved to pay some honour to those who, in their own field, had had as hard a battle to fight and as difficult a part to play. Cards of invitation were accordingly issued to such of our old scholars as we could find in town. We did the thing handsomely. Our largest room in the school was brilliantly lighted; ivy, branches of laurel, and holly with its coral berries, festooned the walls; while long tables groaned under ample stores of coffee, tea, cookies, buns, and cakes of all sorts. It fell to me, as a kind of head of the house, to do the honours.

"The hour of reception arrived. The tread and shuffling of many feet rose on the stairs. The living stream set in, in a constant succession of sober, well-to-do-like young men and women. Wives, once Ragged School girls, were there with blushes and honest pride, introducing their husbands to me, and husbands, once Ragged School boys, their wives. There they were, all well dressed, some even genteelly; without a rag on their backs or trace of wretchedness in their bright and happy faces, self-supporting, upright; earning, by honest industry, wages that in some cases reached the thirty or forty shillings a week of the skilled workman, shopman, or clerk.

"It was a marvellous sight! I was ready to ask, Are these my Ragged School children? The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad. They wore a hundred and fifty in all. What happy faces theirs wore! How joyous to meet again within these walls! With no stronger stimulants than tea and coffee, their spirits rose to the highest pitch, and what a merry ring was in their laugh; what heartiness in their fun, and also in their feeding! How they did enjoy themselves! One of my daughters, who presided at a table, told me of a boy who drank an ocean of tea—ten cups at the least! The evening flew away on lightsome wings: songs were sung, good counsels given; prayers were offered, and blessings asked. We lingered over the scene.



Nor could I look on that gathering of young men and women, so respectably clad, and wearing such an air of decency, and think what, but for the Ragged School, they would have been—without tears of joy, gratitude to God welling up to the eyes. It was a sight worth living for. It was our Harvest Home. Our joy was according to the joy of harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. Such are Ragged Schools! Trees of life; let them be planted in every city: their leaves are for the healing of the people."

Nor are the benefits of such schools confined to this country. Numbers of the children—girls especially—have been assisted to emigrate, and some of the most blessed results which the school has yielded are to be gathered from the subsequent history of those young persons, delivered from associations of a dangerous kind, and separated from ill-doing relatives in the old country.

The Rev. James Wells, of Barony Free Church, Glasgow, who went out in 1867 as a deputy to the Presbyterian Churches of the United States, writes to us:—

"At the close of a service which I conducted in the Scotch Church, New York, a very respectable-looking man, with his wife and two or three children, came to speak to me. He inquired particularly about Dr. Guthrie, and expressed his great regret that he had not been able to make out his visit to America. He then used, as nearly as I can recollect, the following words:—'I was a friendless orphan on the streets of Edinburgh, and my prospects were as dark as they could be. I was one of the first boys that Dr. Guthrie took into his Industrial School; and all I have for time and eternity I owe to that school. It has been one of the great desires of my life to shake hands with Dr. Guthrie, and thank him before I die.' He had prospered in business, was a member of the Scotch Church, and I remember that he had his pew Bible in his hand as he spoke to me, and he used it with an energetic gesture."

So ample indeed was the testimony to the general



well-doing of those who had left the Ragged School for the colonies, that Dr. Guthrie was indignant at the unkind suggestion sometimes thrown out, that these boys and girls, for the sake of the colonies, had better remain "at home." The following passage-at-arms on the subject, as described by himself, is characteristic :—

"WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL, LONDON, July 19th, 1871.

"I have just come from a meeting where I have had a pretty row with the late Attorney-General of Australia.

"The meeting was that of a colonial society, and took place in the large hall of this hotel. In seconding a vote of thanks to Jenkins (author of 'Ginx's Baby'), I made some remarks touching the colonies as a field for our Ragged School children, which were greatly cheered. After me came said Attorney-General, who opposed the idea of sending out, as he chose to characterize my proposition, 'the scum of the country' to the colonies. This set up my *birse*. I waited till he was done, then craved and gave him an answer. My finisher, the *coup de grace*, was furnished by a sheet of paper lying on the table before the Chairman (the Duke of Manchester). Seizing it, I held it out before the meeting, by that time pretty well wrought up in sympathy with myself, saying, 'this was once the "scum" which the gentleman charged me with wishing to introduce into the colonies—once foul, dirty, wretched rags. In it—now white as the snows of heaven—this gentleman (who spoke, I believe, in sheer ignorance of the subject) may see an emblem of the material we would send to the colonies, of the work our Ragged Schools have achieved.' So, tossing down the paper, and bowing to the Duke amid the cheers of the audience, taken by surprise, and manifestly pleased with this illustration, I left, thankful to God that I was ready-witted enough for the occasion: the last words I heard as I left the room to scribble off this letter being, 'Well done, Guthrie!'" (To Mrs. Guthrie.)

For twenty-four successive years, the Annual Meetings of the Original Ragged School were looked forward to with eagerness by the Christian public in Edinburgh,



and invariably secured a bumper house in the Music Hall. "The movement which began in a loft, in a mean street in Aberdeen, has now attained such proportions, that nobles feel it an honour to preside at our public meetings." These were "red-letter days" in Dr. Guthrie's year. At an earlier period, anti-patronage, non-intrusion, and Free Church platforms had been familiar with his stalwart form; in later years, he felt most in his element at the Annual Meeting of his Ragged School. Seated with beaming face on the chairman's left hand, he was surrounded by a compact phalanx of ministers and laymen of every evangelical denomination in the city. On the orchestra behind him, stood row above row the three hundred boys and girls of the school, and when their clear voices rang out in the opening hymn, few could look on the spectacle without emotion and thankfulness.

At these gatherings, Dr. Guthrie's was naturally looked for as the speech of the day. His own manifest feeling and fervour carried the audience irresistibly along with him; and the effect of his appeal was sometimes evidenced before the meeting ended in the most practical of all ways. After sitting down exhausted, it refreshed both his body and spirit to receive, as we have seen him do, a scrap of paper from a gentleman in the audience, with these words pencilled on it, "My dear Doctor, please put me down this year for £100."

"I never engaged in a cause," was his testimony at the Birmingham Conference, "as a man and a Christian



minister that I believe on my death-bed I will look back on with more pleasure or gratitude to God, than that He led me to work for Ragged Schools. I have the satisfaction, when I lay my head upon my pillow, of always finding one soft part of it: and that is, that God has made me an instrument in His hand of saving many a poor creature from a life of misery and crime."

May we not fitly add the lines which he quoted in so many of his speeches, and termed "My favourite Motto" ?—

" I live for those that love me,  
For those that know me true,  
For the heaven that smiles above me.  
And waits my coming to ;  
For the cause that needs assistance,  
For the wrongs that need resistance,  
For the future in the distance,  
For the good that I can do."



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MINISTRY.

"I AM glad to get rid of controversy. I wish to devote my days to preaching, and to the pastoral superintendence of my people." It was thus Dr. Guthrie expressed himself in the first Assembly of the Free Church, immediately after the Disruption had brought to a close the 'Ten Years' Conflict.' He found indeed, as time went on, that he had to take his share of controversy on other fields; still his wish was largely granted; and for the succeeding twenty-one years, from 1843 to 1864, the larger part of his time and toil in Edinburgh was devoted to pastoral and pulpit work.

To the outside world Dr. Guthrie was chiefly known as a preacher; none the less was he a devoted pastor. The members of his flock saw him at their firesides in hours of grief and hours of gladness, and their love for the tender, faithful minister equalled, if it did not surpass, their admiration for the pulpit orator. Often did he express his regret that, from the size of his congregation in Edinburgh, he could not acquire the same intimate acquaintance with individuals as he did with the flock in his country parish. We have heard him tell



of being stopped in the street by some one on whose face the blush of hesitation was followed by a look of surprise and disappointment when Dr. Guthrie said, "But who *are* you, my good friend?" and it distressed him to hear the reply, "Sir, I thought you would have known me. I am a member of your congregation!"

Nevertheless, he tried to overtake the stated visitation of his people; persevering in it, when little able to climb the "weary stairs," as he called them, of Edinburgh houses. His congregation was scattered over the whole city, and many a day, especially from 1850 onwards, he returned to his house prostrated by this work. One Sunday afternoon, in 1849, when leaving his church-door after public worship (which at that time he was unable himself to conduct), he found a private carriage waiting to convey him to the death-bed of an aged officer. An agent of the Scottish Sabbath Alliance, having observed him enter this carriage on his return to his own house, addressed to him next day by post a serious remonstrance. Dr. Guthrie preserved a copy of the reply he sent to the worthy man:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter, and would at once relieve your mind from any fear that I would take offence at your doing what you consider your duty. I admire zeal in a good cause, even when I think that it may, through mistake and misapprehension, have taken a wrong direction.

"I am not a member of the Sabbath Alliance for what I consider good and substantial reasons, and though it is not necessary I should explain them now, I may just say that they are not in any degree of a Secularist character, and that I feel sure there is not a member or agent of that Alliance who holds



the Sabbath in more value than I do. It is just to prevent a prejudice being created against that sacred cause, that I would warn you with the utmost kindness against drawing hasty and harsh conclusions.

"I have been for nearly a twelvemonth and a half an invalid, laid aside from all pulpit duties. You saw me come out of a house in Queen Street and enter a carriage on the Lord's day. Now allow me to say that if you had looked at the plate on the door, you would have found that the house was not mine, and if you had looked at the bell you would have seen a paper hanging at it with the '*Ring gently*,' which is the sign of danger and disease within the dwelling, and from these two things common sense and common charity should have drawn the conclusion that I had been there on a visit of mercy. All this would have saved you the trouble of sending me a letter with an '*Address against using Carriages for attending Public Worship*.' When you saw me, I was entering the carriage of the dying man to return to my own home; and without the use of that carriage I could not have gone on that visit of mercy. I am not uncharitable enough to believe that any member of the Sabbath Alliance would save horse-flesh at the expense of men's souls, or preserve an outward form to the loss of the spirit and love of the Gospel.

"I wish men would recollect more than they do, that the same Bible which inculcates the observance of the Fourth Commandment, enjoins that charity which hopeth all things, and believeth all things."

The emotional, sympathetic nature with which he was endowed made his visits to homes of sorrow and the bedsides of the sick greatly prized. There are very many in whose memory will ever live not only his faithful words, but the tender tones, the tearful eye, the hand laid so kindly on the shoulder as he spoke.

"October 23rd, 1847.

"I have had and still have a more than usual number of my people labouring under serious and formidable maladies. . . . This morning has cut off one of these from my list and the land of the living. . . . Typhus fever showed itself distinctly in her about a week ago. I saw her repeatedly. Two days



ago, I thought she would get safe across the bar—the crisis. God ordered it otherwise; the disease suddenly took a fatal turn, and she entered eternity this morning. I have been seeing the family who are plunged into grief, but not mourning as those who have no hope. The parents were remarking the mercy of God in the midst of their judgment. One of their family had exhibited more softness of heart, and seriousness, and attention to divine things than any of the rest, and that one was she whom they have no more here. The tree was shaken, and the ripest fell.

“May we be growing in ripeness for eternity and glory day by day. What a happy meeting and blessed welcome waits the wanderer at his Father’s house! When one has been long and far away from an earthly home, what a happy sight to see brothers and sisters all crowding to the door to bring us in. What is that but a dim image of what will be seen at the gates of glory?” (*To Miss G. Hay; now Madame de la Harpe.*)

Sometimes afflicted members of his flock, when absent from Edinburgh, expressed a longing desire to see him; and he would allow no inconvenience to stand in the way of his complying with such an intimation. The following was written to the bereaved father of one whose death-bed he had visited several times, travelling far into England on this special errand:—“You are very kind to write to me in the midst of your grief. In your case I can both weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice—weep with the living and rejoice with the dead. I am so glad to hear that —— died in the full enjoyment of a felt peace in Christ. When I left her, she was lying at His feet—a safe posture and position; still it was well to see her reposing on His bosom. I am very grateful to God for any good or comfort I was made the means of communicating to her.”



When himself absent from his flock, he sent frequent letters or messages of sympathy to those of them whose cases lay near his heart at the time. The following reference is to one who had been recently afflicted with the loss of sight :—

“ I was so delighted to read in yours of my good friend Miss Ross. Your note about her was like cold water to a thirsty soul. Give her my most affectionate regards. She and her brother have been kind friends to me. With you and them and others, I have been blessed with friendships beyond most men. I pray the Lord to give Miss Ross patience under her prolonged trial, and that though the sun has ceased to shine to her, He who is the Sun of Righteousness may shine on her with His face. To this world and that sun soon will all our eyes be dark. Blindness is but a short anticipation of what awaits us all. How blessed if we can hope that, when our eyes are shut on earth, we shall open them on glory! May such hopes sustain my dear friend, and cheer her on in her darkened path! ” (*To Miss M. E. Lockhart.*)

Every faithful pastor could probably recall, in the course of a lengthened ministry, so many scenes of varied interest, and illustrations so striking of man's sin and God's grace, that the least eventful of such lives would afford material for an instructive narrative. But it is not every minister who could write Büchsel's " Ministerial Experiences " or Spencer's " Pastor's Sketches." Scattered through Dr. Guthrie's writings there are numerous passages which indicate how remarkable a volume he might have compiled, had he set himself to give his experiences as a pastor to the world.\* Here is one, which he describes as " a scene which I have not forgotten, nor can forget :"—

\* In his " Out of Harness " (1867), under the title of " Unforgiving



"Alone in the garret of a dilapidated house, within a wretched room, stretched on a pallet of straw, covered only by some scanty, filthy rags, with no fire in the empty chimney, and the winter wind blowing in cold and fitful gusts through the broken, battered window, an old woman lay, feeble, wasted, grey. She had passed the eleventh hour; the hand was creeping on to the twelfth. Had she been called? It was important to turn to the best account the few remaining sands of life; so I spoke to her of her soul, told her of a Saviour—urging her to prepare for that other world on whose awful border her spirit was hovering. She stared; and raising herself on her elbow, with chattering teeth and ravenous look, muttered, 'I am cold and hungry.' Promising help, I at the same time warned her that there was something worse than cold and hunger. Whereupon, stretching out a naked and skinny arm, with an answer which if it did not satisfy the reason touched the feelings, she said, 'If you were as cold and as hungry as I am, you could think of nothing else.' The cares of the world were choking the word."\*

Or take this other incident:—

"With reluctant steps I have approached the house of a young wife to communicate tidings of her husband's death. There is not a cloud in that summer sky; nor, as she thinks, in hers. The air rings with songs of happy birds, and the garden amid which her home stands is full of smiling beauty; and fair as the flowers and happy as a singing bird comes that bride forth, rushing out to bid me welcome to her sunny home. With such tidings, I felt like an executioner. I thought of victims going with garlands to the sacrifice. With Jephthah, when his child came forth with dances and delight to meet him, I was ready to cry, 'Alas! my daughter;' and when the truth was told, the knife plunged into her heart, and she,

and Unforgiven," he says:—"In all my experiences as a minister, I never stood by a death-bed so appalling. I had seen people dying in many different frames of mind—some in callous indifference, others in eager anxiety, crying, 'What shall I do to be saved?' not a few with their heads pillowed on Jesus' bosom, enjoying a calm and blissful peace; one or two in an ecstasy, in celestial transports, rejoicing in the Lord. But this woman was dying in the blackness of darkness; hers, the only death-bed I have seen, during a ministry of six-and-thirty years, of blank despair."

\* "The Parables," page 307. (Strahan and Co., London. 1866.)



springing to her feet, with one wild long piercing shriek, dropped on the floor at mine a senseless form, I felt it hard to have such offices to do. I could not give her back her dead, nor at her wild entreaties unsay the dreadful truth, or admit, poor soul ! that I was but playing with her fears." \*

The readers of Dr. Guthrie's Autobiography may remember the account he gives of his Bible-class in his country parish (p. 155). It was to be expected that a department of pastoral diligence to which he attached such value there, would be diligently cared for in Edinburgh. The account which one of its members (now the Rev. T. Cochrane, of Pleasance Free Church) gives, indicates that it was conducted very much on the Arbirlot model. The note-books used by Dr. Guthrie in connection with his examination of young communicants now lie before us. In these he recorded his impressions of the spiritual condition, as well as doctrinal knowledge, of each, with a minuteness which indicates the care and pains he took, during his Edinburgh ministry, in this solemn part of a pastor's work.

In St. John's Free Church, he was surrounded by a willing band of elders, deacons, and Sunday-school teachers. But he would have liked, had that been possible, to have seen every individual whose name stood on the communion roll included in his congregational staff of assistants. His motto was, "to every man his work;" —to every woman hers. Looking down from his pulpit on the crowded pews, he said :—" A thought that presses on me when I cast my eyes over some such great assem-

\* "Speaking to the Heart," page 13. (Strahan and Co., London. 1862.)



bly, and see all these human faces, is this—What power is here! what an immense moral power! We talk of the power latent in steam—latent till Watt evoked its spirit from the waters, and set the giant to turn the iron arms of machinery. It is impossible to over-estimate, or rather to estimate, the power that lies latent in our churches. And why latent? Because men and women neither appreciate their individual influence, nor estimate aright their individual responsibilities.”

It cheered him to find increasing numbers, year after year, not only of the office-bearers but the private members of his flock, engaging in some form of Christian work. When on Sunday afternoons the benediction had been pronounced, and the crowds slowly melted away, and the church doors were closed, the work of the day at St. John's was by no means over. Mr. Guthrie was himself indeed so exhausted, that complete rest was a necessity for him on the evening of the Lord's day, and he spent it generally among his younger children by the fireside; but he felt the liveliest interest in the labours of those who returned to his church at night to work for the Master.\*

\* Besides a congregational Sunday-school held in the morning, there was another of 300 children, gathered from the poor and squalid neighbourhood around, and conducted in the evening under the superintendence of D. Duncan, Esq. Two senior classes were likewise held beneath the church: one, containing 100 young women of the humbler class, was taught for years by Miss Greville (now Mrs. Hogarth), a member of the Church of England; the other, a class of from 70 to 90 working-lads, who had otherwise been lounging on the street, was collected and conducted by one of the elders, Maurice Lothian, Esq., then Procurator-Fiscal for the county. While these were being taught down-stairs, the



Other congregations of the Free Church in Edinburgh were wealthier than Dr. Guthrie's. With a fair share of persons of means, it contained a number of plain people;\* and among the crowds drawn from all parts of the city who filled the pews, he continued to regard with special interest those poorer members of his flock whom he had gathered in originally from the locality around, and who had followed him up the stairs of the Lawnmarket to "Free St. John's." But the nature of his pastoral work was materially changed after 1843. "I laboured for six or seven years," he said, "as a home missionary, and, in so far as by the Disruption I was driven out of that position, it is the only thing I regret."

In 1850, under the guidance of his colleague, Dr. Hanna, the congregation resolved to select a destitute district in the Old Town, and to work there on the territorial system, carrying out as far as possible the plans which Mr. Guthrie himself pursued when he laboured among the poor and ignorant as a parish minister in Old Greyfriars and St. John's. "I advise my own elders," were his words, "instead of attending at two diets of worship on Sundays at Free St. John's, to devote a part of the day to visiting such districts as the

church itself was occupied by Bible-classes for young men of the congregation, taught by three young lawyers attached to Mr. Guthrie's ministry, viz., W. G. Dickson, Esq., now Sheriff of Lanarkshire, Thomas Ivory, Esq., Advocate, and John Carmont, Esq., S.S.C.

\* Considering its mixed character, therefore, it is remarkable that from 1843 to 1864 his congregation should have raised not less than £58,000.



Pleasance,\* and to try what good they can do. I advise every man and woman to do that; and I should be happy to see my church partly empty, if I thought the people were so engaged."

In a letter written thirteen years after that home-mission work had been commenced, we find Dr. Guthrie narrating its results in circumstances of interest:—

"MALVERN, 5th May, 1863.

"On Thursday I breakfasted in London with the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gladstone), in Carlton House Terrace. Breakfast was after a curious fashion. In a very spacious room, instead of one table, there were set out in different parts of the room three tables. By this arrangement, every table, including but seven or eight guests, formed one talking-party. Lord Lytton presided at one table. Mr. Gladstone made me sit at another where he and Mrs. Gladstone were, and where we had Lord Stanley (Derby's son), Sir David Brewster, the Dean of Westminster (Trench), and a young lady who has a great deal to do with the Biblewomen, and efforts to evangelize some districts of London.

"We had a deal of interesting talk anent the scheme inaugurated by the Bishop of London at a great meeting the day before that of our breakfast, for raising one million of money for the evangelization of London. I was able, from our Pleasance and Edinburgh experience generally, to throw some important light, and open up to them new views, on the subject. These met so much the ideas of the Dean of Westminster, that, apologizing for giving a busy man more work, he asked me to communicate to him by letter my views and experience in the matter, which I promised to do. The aspect of the case I pressed on them was the importance of tacking on a poor locality to a good and rather wealthy congregation, such as was done when The Pleasance was taken up and wrought in

\* The Rev. T. Cochrane, of Pleasance Free Church, who regarded Dr. Guthrie as God's instrument in leading him to dedicate his life to the Gospel ministry, has published a narrative of the encouraging result of twenty-one years' work in that Mission district, entitled "*Home Mission Work.*" There have been admitted to church membership 2,108 persons; 1,500 of whom had either never been members of any Church before, or had wholly lapsed from ordinances.



the first instance by St. John's people. . . . One of those present started a difficulty as to how they would do with the West-end congregations in London, when I stated that we worked on a poor district with a wealthy congregation, and made the abundance of the one supply the want of the other, and the piety of the one meet the impiety of the other. 'Ah!' said he, 'how could we get a West-end congregation to deal with St. George's-in-the-East?' on which Mr. Gladstone, with ready ingenuity, said, 'That is settled by the Underground Railway.' " (*To his son Thomas.*)

"Christ sent me," wrote St. Paul, "not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." However much he would have shrunk from naming himself with the great Apostle, Dr. Guthrie felt that preaching was the vocation to which he too had been specially called.

"No readier speaker ever stepped upon a platform," writes his colleague, the Rev. Dr. Hanna; "but such was his deep sense of the sacredness of the pulpit, and the importance of weighing well every word that should proceed from it, that he never trusted to a passing impulse to mould even a single phrase. Yet, in the manuscript, there were often phrases, sentences, illustrations, that one on hearing them could scarcely believe to have been other than the suggestion of the moment, linking themselves as apparently they did with something that was then immediately before the speaker's eye. The explanation of this lay in the power (possessed in any considerable degree by but few, possessed by him in perfect measure) of writing as if a large audience were around him; writing as if speaking, realising the presence of a crowd before him, and having that presence as a continual stimulus to thought and constant moulder of expression. The difference in fact that there almost invariably is between a written and spoken address, was by his vivid imagination and quick sympathies reduced to a minimum, if not wholly obliterated. Herein lay one secret of his great power as a preacher."

He was not long in Edinburgh till he learned in a curious way how much the character and variety of his



illustrations served to gain the attention and awaken the interest of all sorts of hearers :—

*"September 11th, 1838.*

"I was preaching in St. Andrew's Church on Sunday night, and have been greatly amused at two observations which were told me to-day,—the one by Catherine Burns, who was in the back seat of the gallery and heard a man (in allusion to my nautical figures) say to his neighbour before her, 'He is an old sailor; at least he was a while at sea!' And Miss Gilfillan heard one say to another as he came down the stair, 'If he *stick* the Minister trade, yon man would make his bread as a surgeon!' " \*

We remember his visiting the studio of an artist on whose easel lay an unfinished historical picture. He suggested some change, and ventured somewhat freely to criticize some object or attitude on the canvas, when the artist, with just a little warmth, interposed—"Dr. Guthrie, remember you are a preacher and not a painter." "Beg your pardon, my good friend—I *am* a painter; only I paint in words, while you use brush and colours." Writing of the importance, when rightly used, of the pictorial faculty in a preacher, he remarked:—"While this faculty is not to be allowed to run away with a man—to be over indulged—in which I have no doubt I have often sinned), it is a telling one, and valuable for the highest ends."

"Observe either to draw your pen entirely through, or to alter any passage which you find it very difficult to commit. A thing

\* The accuracy of his medical and scientific illustrations has been frequently remarked. "In his logic you might often detect a flaw," it has been said; "in his illustrations, never."



is easily remembered which is striking, and retained which is sticking; and what does not impress your own mind in these ways, and therefore is committed with difficulty, you may be sure won't tell on the minds of your hearers. An illustration or an example drawn from nature, a Bible story or any history, will, like a nail, often hang up a thing which otherwise would fall to the ground. Put such into your passage and you will certainly mend it.

"Deal in pure, pithy Saxon. Never use a word with Greek, or Latin, or French root if you can find one with the same meaning in your mother tongue. Use as few adjectives as possible; they load and cumber the truth.

"Mind 'the three P's.' In every discourse the preacher should aim at PROVING, PAINTING, and PERSUADING; in other words, addressing the Reason, the Fancy, and the Heart.

"The more easy your manner, without losing the character of seriousness and solemnity, so much the better. Vigour and *birr*, without roaring and bellowing, are ever to be aimed at." (*To the Rev. J. W. Lawrie, Tulliallan.*)

During his studying days of the week he used to retire to the vestry of his church, after breakfast, to secure freedom from interruption. "At St. John's vestry," he mentions in a letter of 1847, "I have often had one unbroken *spell* of nine hours' work." But sometimes he composed at home; and then, all the while, we could hear his voice resounding from within his study. The explanation of this he gives in the same letter from which we have already quoted:—

"Don't commit by repeating your discourse aloud. I *write* aloud; but I *commit* in silence. If you do otherwise, the matter will become too familiar to your own ear, and it won't rouse you during the delivery; and, if it don't rouse you, it won't rouse the people. The advantage of writing aloud is, that it teaches to write a spoken style—a great point that."

Not being himself a "reader" in the pulpit, he had no



patience with the habit in others. Thus, to a young minister who had preached for him on one occasion, he wrote on the following day—

"One thing you must shake off,—and that is your *chain*. I mean 'the paper.' I wished all the time that you had swept it down into the Elders' pew. Perhaps you don't read commonly,—so far well; but you should read *never*. You will find one among a thousand who can read so well that it does not mar the effect of the matter—not more. To talk of the popular objection to 'the paper' as being a groundless prejudice is all stuff; it is founded deep in the feelings of our nature. It, I may say, universally produces more or less of monotony,—so much of it, as to act like mesmerism on the audience. To keep an audience wide awake, their attention active and on the stretch (without which how are they to get good?), all the *natural* varieties of tone and action are necessary—qualifications incompatible with the practice of reading.

"Besides, I have found by experience, that the practice of *committing* is to the preacher one of the best means of instructing him how to prepare for the pulpit. . . . My experience has been that what I found difficult to remember has commonly fallen flat upon the people. Finding it blunt, I have set myself to give it point and grind it to a sharper edge. Finding it heavy, I have joined it to a figure, an example, an illustration,—something which, like a balloon, would make it rise.

"One other immense advantage of not 'reading,' is that you are more free to avail yourself of those thoughts and varieties (improvements of expressing even what is prepared) which the animation and heat of the pulpit naturally give. When the soul is excited, thoughts and even language acquire a fire and brilliancy which they have not in the calmness of the study.

"The difficulties are quite surmountable. I don't say in a day; but no great thing is done in a day. With such a help as I use, there is no difficulty,—a piece of paper with the heads and such words written as mark the progress of the discourse and its prominent points." \* (*To the Rev. A. Maxwell, Kings-kettle.*)

\* The sermon of which we present the abstract on the opposite page is printed in the "Way to Life," 1862, p. 156.



Dr. Guthrie was neither a political nor controversial preacher. "In times like these" (to quote from Dr. Fraser of Marylebone's tribute to his memory), "when many court popularity by affecting secular themes in sacred places, it is well worth remembering that the most popular preacher of this generation always dealt with simple Gospel truths." Yet in presence of what he considered public wrongs he could not be altogether silent. His denunciations of slavery, for example, were unsparing. Writing in 1853, at the season of year when Edinburgh is crowded with tourists from all parts of the world, he tells of "a crowd of strangers on Sabbath; among others, an American slave-holding lady, who charged Dr. Simpson [afterwards Sir J. Y. Simpson], who brought her, with having told me that she was to be there—I happened to come across her *shins* by a sentence about slavery."\*

One might have heard Dr. Guthrie preach for years without ever discovering him to be a man of humour; and it is only once or twice in his printed sermons that the reader will light on a sentence where it gleams forth; so strictly did he keep under restraint, while in the pulpit, a faculty he possessed in no ordinary degree, and to which he gave full scope on the platform. "Few clergymen," writes Dr. Hanna, "of churches in

\* One of the first sermons he ever published was "The War in some of its social, political, and religious aspects." (A. & C. Black, Edinburgh, 1854.) Running counter as it did to the popular enthusiasm regarding the Crimean War (then at its height), it exposed its author to considerable misrepresentation.



II Sam. I. 26

Never Elegy. most Master-Rare. preserved, as Amber

I Love to Dared

Just heart - Obstacle mis bonum. Early Days <sup>from blood stain</sup> dust. lure honour

Principal figure: Such a son. Spots. none recaded.

Years friendship. Thou love neighbour. Admire Statue Thy law

Rest honor. greater grace. Veins in wood. account. fruit Peace

Turn nobler Thy love Galvary - lion bay - kill to love du Greatest

II Apply to love of Christ

1 Wonderful in objects

1 Nothing lovely in us. Loved Unlovely

Spangled skies. lovely with affection Load Stone Honey sucke

Not detracting. worthy in David. Brave, where end Brit

He armour beaver. in common. 2 Quicksilver

Turning, in us love? in arms. Not nothing, but Sin aloha

Not Start. justify. Matth? Corpse. 'a grave. Se Salva dust

1 Eclipse. Some attraction. jewel. No rock. 2 Many know

like worms. death. leaver. leprosy. whole head sick

Since Marriage. altogether lovely. Emblem Sun not

2 Loved Unlovely works right

Love what loves Dog. Eweland. Law attract? Rocky Rock

Not unlock Redemption. Isos virtue. Aln H. Smith. Abrah

But hating. Carnal. Enemies. these wounds?

What love? what Hate? Rose Sharon. bell water amity out

2 Wonderful in Expression quaint wonder

1 in health Amaga. welling. lost lost. who? How Son

on Calvary angels. who buffeted, faint, mangled Beloved Son

What ailed Osea? forsake? One word Love. Womb frase Shing

Conclusion passing coming

For strip rede gum su. bow girdle Italy. What? to to

Sins as nation. Beggar. Room glorious. Woman with it

What even death. Day, heart, hand cold. was ple

Happie. He also What never. Perman with it a







which large 'liberty of prophesying' in the pulpit is permitted, and who were as great humorists as Rowland Hill or Dr. Guthrie, have been able to restrain their natural propensity so far that a rippling and suppressed smile has not been seen occasionally stealing over the faces of their congregations. But I never saw the shadow of a smile pass over the congregation of Free St. John's."\*

"What multitudes," says Dr. Cairns, "have heard the pure gospel of the grace of God from his lips, adorned but not disguised by the thousand hues of his exhaustless fancy, gushing forth from the tenderness of his own sympathetic heart, and laden with a wealth of anecdote and incident that brought in all human experience, dark and bright, of saint and of sinner, to reinforce its lessons! . . . As in the parallel case of Bunyan, the Gospel was not diluted, only simplified, vitalised, intensified by these gifts. The strait gate was as strait as ever, only the approach to it from the City of Destruction was lighted up. The narrow way was as narrow as ever, only brightened by waymarks, and cheered by emblems and parables in the Interpreter's House, and by glimpses of the Celestial City from the Delectable Mountains."†

Every reader of his sermons may perceive that "the

\* "In the pulpit," we quote from a Scotch newspaper, "one half of his rich nature was necessarily restrained. He could be pathetic there, but not humorous; though we did once hear him begin a sermon by saying that God, on one occasion, used an ass to preach to a sinner, but that he was not in the way of using asses when he could get better instruments!"

† "Dr. Guthrie, as an Evangelist," by John Cairns, D.D.



preacher sought out acceptable words ;” but his primary aim was to declare what he believed to be “all the counsel of God.” Some might not like his Calvinism ; but none could mistake what he believed and taught concerning man’s ruin by sin, and God’s electing grace in Christ Jesus as his only hope. Still, Calvinist as he certainly was, he emphatically disapproved any attempt to square Scripture with the supposed requirements of a doctrinal system. “John,” to quote a sentence from one of his discourses, “uses a very broad expression. ‘Jesus Christ,’ he says, ‘. . . is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.’ ‘The whole world’—‘ah!’ some would say, ‘that is dangerous language.’ It is God’s language ; John speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. It throws a zone of mercy around the world. Perish the hand that would narrow it by a hair’s breadth !”

“I worshipped in — yesterday. I was much shocked and hurt at the tone and style of the preacher ; such austerity and *forbiddingness* (to coin a word) never, in my hearing at least, clouded the gracious gospel. He declared he did not envy the state of those—he had a bad opinion of their condition—who did not *rejoice that God’s enemies were destroyed, and that with a destruction without remedy* ; and he laid such emphasis, I would say savage emphasis, on the word ‘rejoice,’ and his eye flashed such fire while he announced a proposition which would require the utmost and most careful explanation, that by way of contrast the words of Paul rose to my memory, ‘of whom I tell you even weeping ;’ as also the touching picture of our blessed Saviour when from the Mount of Olives he looked down on Jerusalem, and fell a weeping, saying, ‘Oh ! Jerusalem, Jerusalem !’

“I really felt exceedingly indignant, and very little more would



have tempted me to leave the place. There was not a word of tender encouragement dropped to a poor sinner ; I thought I saw the man stamping with his foot and putting out the smoking flax. It was a horrible caricature of the gospel ; it hadn't an echo of the song the angels sang to the shepherds of Bethlehem ; I hope never again to hear the like of it. My opinion is, that the best do the glorious gospel miserable injustice ; and so far as my judgment on myself is concerned, I feel that so strongly, that I sometimes feel how happy I would be to retire from the great work and give place to others better fitted to do it justice. But when the field is so large, and the labourers so few, the cause can ill spare any ; and therefore I would rejoice to be back again to my pulpit to tell of Jesus and His love to man." (*To Mr. G. M. Torrance.*)

For two years after the Disruption, Mr. Guthrie's congregation assembled in the large chapel of the Wesleyans in Nicolson Square. A new church, to accommodate twelve hundred sitters, was meanwhile being erected on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh, in the immediate vicinity of the parish created for him in 1839, and after which it was named St. John's Free Church. The sum of £6,000, which the congregation subscribed for its erection, could not secure a very imposing building ; and therefore Mr. Guthrie's anxiety was that the able architect\* should expend his strength chiefly on the interior. It was opened on 18th April, 1845. "The sun rose bright on Friday," he wrote to Mr. Fox Maule. "We had an overflowing audience. The church looked beautiful. Everybody was delighted with it. After sermon I made a short address ; in which,

\* Thomas Hamilton, who designed the High School on the Calton Hill.



among other matters, I set myself frankly and fairly to defend and justify the ornate character of our church, telling my hearers that 'there is no sin in beauty, and no holiness in ugliness.'"

"I know," he wrote to another correspondent, "considering the character of our church, some of my excellent and beloved friends look on me, as rather too much inclined to these sort of outward things. Nevertheless, I am thoroughly convinced of our wisdom in building such a reputable place of worship. I believe that the cause of those who have separated through the influence of conscientious motives from the Church of England (in many instances the cause of gospel truth and liberty) has suffered much from the mean houses in which they have met for worship.

"It is an injury to religion to associate it with meanness in any way. It is a right expression of a right feeling, to serve God with the best of everything. I sympathize entirely with the sound feelings of our good old Presbyterian peasantry who reserved their best dress for the Sabbath, and their very best dress for the Sacrament. I remember a number of good old bodies, both in Brechin and Arbirlot, who continued, amid their deepest poverty, to keep an unsoiled, old-fashioned gown (perhaps their marriage one) for the Sacrament, in which—with snow-white linen cap and red plaid hood, and a bible folded up in handkerchief in the one hand and a bunch of thyme or rosemary in the other—they came tottering forth once or twice a year, to sit down at the table of our Lord. Such sights leave a healthy impression on young minds, indeed on all minds." (*To Mr. G. M. Torrance.*)

But while he admired the tasteful interior of his church, he was specially pleased at that being secured without the sacrifice of requirements more essential to a place of worship.

"The children of this world," he wrote to a friend, "are wise in their generation. Theatres are built for good sight; how many churches are not?—Stuck full of pillars, roaring with echoes, and God's light of day so dimmed and diminished



in passing through painted windows that the Bible or Prayer-book is read with difficulty, the features of the preacher are lost, and he himself appears like a distant object looming through mist. No men appear to be more ignorant of their profession than church architects. I remember, for example, the echoes in St. Stephen's Established Church; you seemed to hear some mocking imp in a corner of the gallery mimicking the tones of Dr. Muir! And at Dunfermline, when I preached in the Memorial Church of Robert the Bruce, I was told to speak slowly and deliberately. So, when (sick of dropping my words like laudanum out of a bottle) I went off in my usual style, the people in the gallery just heard something like the rumble of thunder among the rafters overhead!

The scene when he preached in St. John's is photographed on the memory of multitudes. What a hush of expectancy on the upturned faces of the people, as, entering from a side door, the preacher is seen pressing with eager step through the crowd who fill the passage from the vestry to the pulpit! The swing of the broad shoulder, the head bent forward, the look of earnestness on the flushed countenance, all tell of a man who feels he has come forth on an important errand, and is straitened till it be accomplished. The opening psalm and first prayer over, the doors, within which the strangers in the school-rooms below the church had been pent up, are thrown open; and, swarming up the stairs, the eager crowd now pours into the church itself, till, in a few minutes more, every foot of standing room is filled.

Dr. Guthrie's appearance and oratory have been often described:—

“He had all the external attractions of a pulpit orator; an unusually tall and commanding person, with an abundance of easy and powerful, because natural, gesture; a quickly and



strongly expressive countenance, which age rendered finer as well as more comely (for in early and middle manhood it was gaunt, with a dusky complexion, overshadowed by lank black hair); a powerful, clear, and musical voice, the intonations of which were varied and appropriate, managed with an actor's skill, though there was not the least appearance of art."

Lord Cockburn, himself a most persuasive speaker, thus describes Dr. Guthrie:—

"Practical and natural; passionate without vehemence; with perfect self-possession, and always generous and devoted, he is a very powerful preacher. His language and accent are very Scotch, but nothing can be less vulgar, and his gesture (which seems as unthought about as a child's) is the most graceful I have ever seen in any public speaker. He deals in the broad expository Ovidian page, and is comprehended and felt by the poor woman on the steps of the pulpit as thoroughly as by the strangers who are attracted solely by his eloquence. Everything he does glows with a frank, gallant warmheartedness rendered more delightful by a boyish simplicity of air and style."

Numerous anecdotes have been put in circulation of the effect of Dr. Guthrie's pulpit power. Some of these are probably exaggerations, but the two which follow may be relied on:—

A friend, who when a medical student in Edinburgh used often, with some others of his class, to attend Free St. John's, remembers how, one Sunday afternoon, he was borne irresistibly onwards along the passage until within a few yards of the foot of the pulpit. There stood immediately in front of him a rough short-set man, past middle life, who, if one might judge by the plaid, odorous of peat smoke, which crossed his broad back, and his whole appearance, seemed a Highland cattle-drover—a



stranger manifestly both to the metropolis and to Dr. Guthrie. From the very first, the drover was riveted—a pinch of snuff every now and again evincing his inward satisfaction. Towards the end of the sermon, and just as the preacher was commencing a prolonged illustration, the stranger applied to his horn-mull. Arrested, however, he stood motionless, his hand raised with the snuff between his fingers, his head thrown back, his eyes and mouth both wide open. The instant that the passage was completed, and ere the audience had time to gather their breath for a space, the drover applied the snuff with gusto to his nostrils, and, forgetting in his excitement alike the place and the occasion, turned his head to the crowd behind, exclaiming quite audibly, “Na, sirs! but I *never* heard the like o’ that!”

The following is in the words of an eye-witness, the Rev. George Hay, for many years missionary in the congregation:—“During one of Dr. Guthrie’s powerful appeals to the unbeliever to close with the free offer of salvation through Jesus Christ, he described a shipwreck and the launching of the lifeboat to save the perishing crew in such vivid colours, that the dreadful scene appeared actually to take place before our eyes. Captain C——, a young naval officer, who was sitting in a front seat of the gallery, was so electrified that he seemed to lose all consciousness of what was around him. I saw him spring to his feet, and begin to take off his coat, when his mother took hold of him and pulled him down. It was some time before



he could realise where he was. He told me a few days after, in his mother's house, that he became oblivious to everything else; that the scene described appeared so real that he was entirely carried away, and rose to cast his coat and try to man the lifeboat."

It is told of a famous preacher, that being informed of some eminent persons by whom his sermons were much admired, he said, "Ah! let them not put me off with admiration; it is their salvation I want." To a similar anxiety Dr. Guthrie was no stranger. In a letter written in 1857 to his sister Clementina, he thus expresses himself—

"There are few things that give me such distress among my own people, as to see how ready they are to be dissatisfied with their heavenly food, when they don't get it in the dish most to their choice. To say the least of it, it minds me of those bygone days when we were children and used to quarrel with our porridge and the servants, if it was not served up in our own wooden *cap*. This is a ludicrous comparison, yet it is very true; and I sometimes think that little good is doing here among us, because the people are apt to exalt the servant above the Master. Let us all be abased, so that Christ may be exalted."

Having in view the vital distinction between a successful ministry in man's esteem and in God's, he longed to see his preaching more fruitful in the highest sense, and mourned that, after all, more hearers left his church-door charmed than changed. There were many, nevertheless, who were "seals" of his ministry. Some of the most valued friends he had in Edinburgh were endeared to him by a more hallowed tie than that



they were members of his flock ; they were his own children in the faith, and he loved them as such ; and, now that his ministry is accomplished, the unlocking of his repositories has furnished abundant proof of the blessing with which the Master honoured it. These letters are, of course, sacred, but they afford precious evidence of the power of God's grace : the bow was drawn at a venture, but the shaft was impelled by another power and guided by another skill than man's.

From such communications Dr. Guthrie learned of some who came to scoff but remained to pray, and of others, drawn in the first instance by no higher motive than curiosity to hear a famous preacher, who had been led to Christ. Some wrote from distant lands to tell that they are there preaching the gospel, to whose power and value they were awakened years before in that church of his in Edinburgh. No words can express the encouragement these letters gave him, nor the thankfulness with which they were treasured up.

During 1845-46, as explained in a former chapter, Mr. Guthrie was absent from his congregation nearly twelve months on his Manse Fund Mission. He had not long returned to his pulpit, ere ominous symptoms indicative of impaired action of the heart manifested themselves. The protracted strain his nervous system had sustained during the Manse Fund tour, followed by the excitement inseparable from the stormy commencement of the



Ragged School enterprise, were telling too plainly now on his vigorous frame. In the autumn of 1847 it became manifest that he must (to use a favourite phrase of his) "call a halt."

He obtained leave of absence from the Presbytery for several months, to try what entire rest would do, but at the end of that period was wholly unfit to resume work. He suffered from distressing attacks of faintness, excessive languor, and prostration of the whole system. To himself and to his friends it seemed not improbable that his preaching days, if not his days altogether, were near a close. He was at that period comparatively a poor man. With a family of nine children, all under age, dependent on him for support, it needed no small faith to rise above the anxieties in which his circumstances placed him; not to mention the keen trial of being "shelved," to a man now in the zenith of his pulpit influence, and with the Ragged School needing his personal oversight in its experimental stage.

Having gone north to Brechin to consult his brother, Dr. A. Guthrie, on whose skill he justly placed great reliance, he thence wrote Mrs. Guthrie—

*"November 6th, 1847.*

"I think I am able to leave the case in the hands of God, and desire patiently and cheerfully to acquiesce in His will. Whether I am or am not to be restored to that health needful for past public duties, whether life is to be long or short, spent henceforth in more private and quiet duties, or as before,—may we get grace to live to the Lord.

"I commend the children to the grace of God. I hope that the elder part of them are remembering me in prayer, and the



circumstances of trial in which we are now placed. Take care of yourself."

And to Miss G. Hay, a day or two thereafter—

"I desire to submit myself entirely to the will of God, and moreover that He would sanctify this monition and trial both to me and mine. On coming here, I was led, through my youngest boy's behaviour, to see what a blessed thing it is to receive the kingdom of God 'as a little child.' My little fellow, about four years old, whom I brought with me, gave himself no trouble amid the boats, omnibuses, and railway coaches, on sea, land, and in dark tunnels: his father was at his side, and never a care, or fear, or doubt, or anxiety had he. May we have grace to be led by the hand, and trust to the care and kindness of a reconciled God and Father!"

On his return to Edinburgh, he was examined by Dr. Alison, Professor Miller, and his family physician, Dr. Fairbairn; and his case was deemed by them so serious as to demand that he should at once give up all active duties. This advice he was very unwilling to take. Twice in January, 1848, he preached to his people; but the subsequent exhaustion proved the risk he was running, and at last he consented meanwhile to give up both pastoral and pulpit work.

“EDINBURGH, February 1st, 1848.

"I am now sensible that while other people, looking at my bulk and the apparent ease with which I spoke, took me for being much stronger than I really was, I myself attempted to do much more than I was fit for. There was clearly no call for me to work on till I was often so exhausted that I could not eat, and could not sleep, and often in family worship at night felt such exhaustion that with difficulty I got spoken out a short prayer." (*To Provost Guthrie.*)

The generous sympathy shown by his people and



friends touched him deeply. His physicians had ordered him to leave home; but how was the expense of a lengthened absence and journey to be met? In the month of February, 1848, a gift of one hundred guineas was presented to Mrs. Guthrie, and shortly thereafter there came £500 more,\* to enable her husband and herself to leave home and travel with a view to his recovery.

The winter and spring of 1848 Mr. Guthrie spent in various parts of England; the summer and autumn in the Scottish Highlands.

For nearly two whole years his active ministry was interrupted. His place in St. John's was meanwhile filled by a succession of friends in the ministry; among others, by Dr. Wood, now of Dumfries, Rev. R. Taylor, now of Norwood, Rev. J. Shewan, now of North Berwick, and by Dr. Hanna, whose connection in this way with the congregation resulted, as we shall see, in important issues to it and to Mr. Guthrie. Though during that long interval of absence his lips were sealed, his hands (to use his own expression on another occasion) were not tied; and many of his letters were read to his people from time to time.

"BIRKELAND HOUSE, 9, PORTLAND STREET, LEAMINGTON,  
*February, 1848.*

"MY DEAR DR. IRVING,†—In coming here, we spent a day in Newcastle, my object being to visit the Ragged School

\* These sums were due in no small part to the friendly exertions of two members of his Kirk session, G. M. Torrance, Esq., and George Dalziel, Esq., W.S.

† The late David Irving, LL.D., one of his elders:—the learned Librarian of the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.



there, and see what progress they had made in their work. After threading and picking our way through lanes as dirty and confined as any in Edinburgh, we climbed an old-fashioned stair, and, among some forty or fifty unwashed, ragged urchins, we found ourselves in the Ragged School. The accommodation was poor, but I am glad to say that they are preparing new premises in a *chare*, not far off, but in a better part of the town. The more respectable closes in that town go by the odd name of *chares*: perhaps your learning may help you to the origin of the word. Its meaning, they tell about Newcastle, puzzled one of the English judges (it could not be Lord Eldon, for he himself was born in one of these very *chares* in that very town of Newcastle). On a trial for murder, to the amazement of the judge, one of the witnesses swore that he saw two men go in at the top of a *chare*, and when sternly called to consider and explain what he said, he only made the matter worse by hastily adding, 'It's quite true, my lord; and I saw them come out at the bottom!'

"Leaving Newcastle, we next pitched our tent for two days in York. I also wished to see the Ragged School in that ancient city, having had a good deal of correspondence with some of the friends of the cause there, as well as at Newcastle. As we were hesitating to which hand to turn beneath a grey gateway, a boy without a cap, with unwashed hands and face, ragged from the shoulders to the heels, darted by us, and gambolled up the stair. There was no mistaking that sign of a Ragged School!—so, following without question, we found ourselves in an old room of an old college—in the Ragged School of York. It had only been opened two days before; and, so far as we saw, things promised well.

"Afterwards I met my correspondent, and he alarmed me by announcing that he had asked some of the friends of the cause to wait on me at our Inn, that I might address them on the subject. There is no refusing a kind, generous Englishman when he is set on a good object; and though I protested that if I had been able to speak I should not have been in York at all, I found that there was no help for it but go and face this meeting. There were two of the episcopal clergymen of the city, and a goodly number of gentlemen. I was amused to find the very fears, in York, which in some measure alarmed some of our good friends in Edinburgh. These, however, I must say, were presented to me, not as objections of the gentlemen who waited on me, but as those they had to meet and fight with.

"The Roman Catholics—though I have not heard of any



proselytes—number a very considerable body here (Leamington), consisting chiefly of servants and the higher classes. They are about, I was told, to open a school for the *gratis* education of any who choose to attend: at hearing which, to the astonishment of some good people, I expressed my sincere delight. Now, don't start at my apparent heresy. The truth is, it is high time for Christian Protestants to bestir themselves to meet the wants of those poor children whom they have left to crime and misery, negligent both of their bodies and souls, allowing them to grow up criminals, and then punishing them for being so. I am happy to say that the zeal of the Papists is more and more stirring up the slumbering energies of the Protestants, and that all denominations here have started on a race with each other in the cause of education. May God speed the work!"

"LEAMINGTON, *February 26th*, 1848.

"I have seen Dr. Jephson, and got a most kind reception from him. He says that he never saw a clearer case. Looking at me with his great piercing eyes, he said, 'You have had one foot in your grave, sir, and with the other you have been kicking the bucket.' He told me I had been as near gone as man could be; but that there was nothing mortal in my case, unless I chose to make it so by refusing to abstain for a long time from all mental exercise and excitement. The action of the heart he pronounced unusually feeble; he had never almost found it so feeble.

"After the examination was over, he sat down at the table to write a prescription. But, in place of immediately doing so, he began with some cases in illustration of the restoring effects of his applications, and the stage has not a more perfect actor. He gave us an American quaker lady to the very life; Matthews could not have beat him in putting on the vacant stare of a half paralytic; in truth he is a man of very versatile and extraordinary talents."

"LEAMINGTON, *March 1st*, 1848.

"Jephson said to-day, 'We must get you made better, for I have been more bothered with letters about you than any man. If I don't make you better, they will take off my head!' . . .

"My diet is a total abstinence from all stimulants to the body and mind; no coffee, no tea, no ale, no porter, no whisky, no brandy, no wine. Nevertheless, I am in the best of spirits. I rise in the morning with a spring and freshness of mind; no gloomy views, hot hands, darkness,



nervousness, which it needs a cup of strong tea or coffee to dispel. Jephson declares we all load the springs of nature, —even moderate eaters, as the world would call them; and that I believe to be true. I grant you for the first day or two it was rather trying to see Miss Elliott-Lockhart and my wife at their luxuries, while I got no share. However, I made up in breakfast as far as I could. I have heard of some *bon vivant* who was restricted to one glass of wine per day: 'But,' said he, 'there was nothing said about the size of the glass,' so he got one as capacious as a goblet! Acting on this principle, while Jephson allowed one egg to breakfast, and had said nought about its size, we set off to look out for the biggest hen's, since we had no chance of getting an ostrich's. The mistress of the shop where we at last found eggs of a more than ordinary circumference, assured us that they were fresh, for she got them three times a week from a farm in the neighbourhood where they kept an 'undred 'ens.'

"On Sunday afternoon a heavy shower came down, as I was close on the fine Puseyite Church. I sought a house of refuge there; grand singing—the choir, men and boys, dressed in white, their voices sometimes like the clang of trumpets. After prayers the curate proceeded to catechize the boys of the choir. He asked, 'How do we get a title to everlasting life?' Answer, 'By the application of the blood of Christ.' Then this question—at which, from a lofty gallery where I was seated behind a great gothic pillar, I pricked up my ears and stretched out my neck to hear—'When did we get that application of the blood of Christ?' Answer, 'At our baptism.' This and such other stuff was bad. Another curate then mounted the pulpit. Poor fellow! he was balder than I am, and still a curate. On the whole his discourse was good, serious, and devout;—his subject, the parable of the Sower; and I really felt edified, and I hope improved, by the sermon.

"You cannot send us too many letters. How can you better spend a part of an hour and the whole of a penny?"

"LEAMINGTON, *March 4th*, 1848.

"This French revolution is certainly the most marvellous event which has occurred in my day. The scenes shift in France as fast as on a playhouse stage. I remember, since 1814, Napoleon dethroned; then Napoleon again restored; then the elder branch of the Bourbons enthroned again; then, in 1830, Louis Philippe crowned; and now, the Republic cleared from



the rubbish of half a century and set up again; the scenes you saw with your boyish eyes looked at through your spectacles! These make five Revolutions in thirty years, which gives us a Revolution in that country at the average rate of every six years. In that period *we* think under our old Constitution of electing a new Parliament; they think of electing a new dynasty, and forming a new constitution. Their figure is hardly cold from the casting before it is broken up to be recast into a new mould. . . . Such a great change must be followed by greater commotions than have yet happened. Gourds that grow in a night go in a night. A thousand will agree about pulling down, when ten of them will not agree about putting up; and it is to the last work that France has now to address herself.

"I had a long discussion here the other day with Lady — on Millenarianism, telling her, among other things, that I had had so much practical work to do in this world that I had had no time for these inquiries and speculations; which I intended as a gentle hint to her excellent ladyship, and others such as she, to address themselves and give their hearts amid surrounding scenes of crime and ignorance and misery to the example of Him who 'went about doing good.'"

"LEAMINGTON, *March 7th*, 1848.

"Jephson acknowledges that I am a first-rate patient, save that I get on subjects of interest and talk too much. He threatened yesterday that if I would not behave better he would bring a padlock for my jaws! He is a great curiosity. He and I get on amazingly: he abuses the Free Kirk to Mrs. Guthrie when my back is about." (*To Miss Mary Stoddart, now Mrs. Reid.*)

"LEAMINGTON, *6th April*, 1848.

"If the mass of the people had more intellectual cultivation and religious knowledge, England were the grandest country the sun shines or ever shone upon. But they are wofully ignorant. There is a smart, active servant in this house who comes from Birmingham, and who told me the other day at dinner, when I was catechizing her about the church she attended there, that she was a *Unitarian*. We were convinced she was in total darkness about the whole matter: and so it turned out; for to Miss Lockhart, who agreed to catechize her when alone, and who, as if she wished to know what her creed was, asked her what the Unitarians believed, she



replied with great simplicity, 'Oh! we just believe the Bible, ma'am, but not the Prayer-Book!'

"We thought it best that Miss L. should endeavour to give her some instruction; but it is ill getting people to understand these things whose powers of thinking have never been cultivated; her answer to Miss L. on one occasion being, that 'cook said it was *impossible* there could be three persons in the Godhead.' Melancholy as it is, it would make you laugh to see 'cook,' her theological authority!

\* \* \* \* \*

"We three, with a boy to row, boated it down the other day to Warwick Castle, a distance of two miles, in the most *cockersome* thing you ever saw. It was really and truly a canoe, and had I known, what I found out when we were fairly in the middle of the waters, that they were six, seven, and eight feet deep, we never would have ventured into this concern. After sounding the depth, and feeling that whenever I stirred or made the slightest motion (or, as Mrs. Guthrie said, even *spoke*), the boat *whumled* to one side, and threatened to deposit our bodies (without even the glories of martyrdom) where the Papists deposited the ashes of Wickliffe, I ceased to joke our small rower about the 'tempests and dangers' he was exposed to in the navigation of the Avon. . . .

"So little do the people of Warwick sympathize with the modern taste of our cemeteries where the graves are levelled flat with the earth, that they take the utmost care to form the green grass hillocks, which to my eye look best of all, and which afforded to a man of taste the occasion of this beautiful saying:— 'Death is like the mole: his progress is known by the mounds he flings up.' They heap up a large quantity of earth above the grave, and bind it together in a long hillock by the stems of the wild rose."

"LEAMINGTON.

"MY DEAR MR. GUNN,\*—We attended forenoon service in the Methodist Chapel, where we had the pleasure to hear a most sound and excellent discourse. At its close, the minister announced that the congregation would hold a Love Feast in the afternoon.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* One of the masters in the Edinburgh High School, and an elder of Dr. Guthrie's; afterwards LL.D. On his lamented death in 1851, Dr. Guthrie preached the first and only funeral sermon he ever delivered. It was afterwards published under the title of "Christ and Christ Crucified." (A. and C. Black, Edinburgh.)



"While the scene left a solemn and holy impression on our hearts, it reminded me of a scheme which has often floated through my mind. I would like to see a real practical Love Feast provided for the poor of God's household every Sabbath day. One of the finest saints at whose feet I ever sat told me on her death-bed, how she had more than once worshipped with us in the Magdalene Chapel both at the forenoon and afternoon service without having ever broken her fast, and how she and her little daughter (then sitting on the floor weeping by her dying mother) had sometimes passed the whole Sabbath day without any other food than the Word of God. She is now joined to those who stand before the Throne, above dreary Sabbaths or pining hunger, and her orphan child is kindly cared for by some Christian ladies far away from Edinburgh. But this death-bed revelation made on my mind at the time a painful and what still remains as an indelible impression.

"I have often thought it would be a grand scheme—a beautiful and Christian thing—to provide at least one decent and comfortable diet for our poor brethren and sisters in Christ on the Lord's day. I have no sympathy with those who would make the Sabbath a day of gloom; I would have the sun to shine brighter, and the flowers to smell sweeter, and nature to look fairer, on that day than on any other; I would have the very earth to put on her holiday attire on the blest morning on which our Saviour rose, and, on this day above all others, would like a flood of comforts to flow in on the households of our poor. It has always afforded me great satisfaction and delight to read how kindly and wisely David mingled earthly mercies with spiritual blessings. Does it teach us no lesson to read how, on the occasion of bringing up the ark, when he had made an end of offering up the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, and blessing the people, 'He dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine?'

"No man need hold up his hands and say, this is a wild, impracticable scheme, for I had the happiness to see a curious illustration of its practicability the other day at Warwick. That most ancient and interesting town, where there stands one of the grandest castles England can boast of, is within half an hour's walk of Leamington, and we drove there on a Sabbath forenoon to worship. Well, when I had sat down and was casting my eyes about, they fell on an open press which stood under the organ gallery, and which was filled to the top of its some half-dozen groaning shelves with loaves of wheaten



bread. It occurred to me that this might be on a small scale such a love feast as I had often thought of, and so soon as, after an excellent sermon, the blessing of the minister and the pealing of the organ dismissed the congregation, I made my way to this press, and found from the sexton that it was as I supposed. The loaves were gifted to the poor by various individuals, whose bounty was to be distributed on the Sabbath day, and each shelf told in gilt letters the names of the different benefactors, with the number of loaves that each had gifted.

"I am as ready to stand up for my country as any man,—but I am bound to say that it is highly creditable to the English people that their country so largely abounds with examples of kindness and benevolence. Here, in many instances at least, poverty is not dealt with as a crime; nor, if it come from the hand of Him who setteth up one and pulleth down another, should it ever or anywhere be so. I am thoroughly persuaded, could the matter be well arranged, that many Christian people would be found who would rejoice to send some of their superabundant comforts to the Lord's poor, on the Lord's day, when engaged in the Lord's more immediate service."

"LEAMINGTON.

"MY DEAR DR. IRVING,—Though no more than yourself episcopally disposed, yet it is a matter of great thankfulness when one finds Episcopacy and Evangelism associated, for it is amazing the hold which the Church of England has of the people of this country. The Establishment here, and that with you in Scotland, are two very different things indeed. The Establishment in Scotland might be torn up and rooted out without producing any very marked change upon the face of the country, or in the arrangements of society; but, here in England, the Established Church has struck its roots so deep and spread them so wide among all orders of the people, that it will require an extraordinary convulsion to disestablish it. The people have become quite familiar with its evils, abuses, and bondage to the State. From all that I can hear, for example, the controversies connected with the gross Erastianism of the appointments to the sees of Manchester and Hereford excited far more interest among the mass of our people in Scotland than they did here.

"It would be hard indeed to say or foretell what it would require to rouse the English people from their apathy. The mass of them have no notion whatever of the doctrines of



Non-intrusion or Spiritual Independence. I don't believe they would lose a good dinner for them, not to speak of their livings, far less their lives.

"Nevertheless and notwithstanding, there is a great deal of good in the Church of England. We have heard some really noble preaching in its pulpits since we came here—preaching which for piety and power would do credit to any Church. England is enormously wealthy; its people are brave and generous, open handed and open hearted, and if some hundreds of its ministers would but burst the fetters with which the State has bound them, and come forth a Free Church of England, they would form one of the greatest and most efficient Churches in Christendom. That must come some day; but as one rousing event occurs after another, and the irons, as one would say, are driven farther and farther into their flesh, and we see them making no struggle to be free, we are inclined to exclaim, 'How long, O Lord, how long?'

"The Methodists here are as busy and active as they are everywhere else. I had the happiness and real profit to hear on a Sabbath afternoon one of their 'local preachers.' These are men engaged in common business, who, in lack of an educated clergy, preach in the more remote districts of the country; they are the *pioneers* of the Church. This was a plain, decent-looking man, with a fine, lofty forehead silvered with grey, and whose hands bore evidence of the toil by which he earned his bread. Very modest, but quite collected in his bearing, he grew earnest and animated by the close, and preached to us a most stirring and fervent sermon, every word of which seemed to come from his heart. I never listened to anything with more pleasure. There was nothing *outré*, or out of the way, in it, save the occasional effect of his Warwickshire tongue, as when, nearly to the upsetting of my gravity, he exclaimed, "Noah was a hare!" meaning thereby (for he was speaking of that patriarch and the covenant of grace) that he was *an heir* of the covenant. We have all our peculiarities: Dr. Chalmers had the strong accent of Fife, and if I might mention myself in conjunction with such a name, they tell me that I have a strong North Country tongue. Anyway, it was a fine thing to see this worthy man preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I went up to him when the service was over to express my thanks, and my hope that the Lord would bless the word, when he told me that he had been preaching for thirty years among the poor around. He follows his Master, and goes about doing good. May we all be enabled to follow him as he follows Christ!



"On all our Churches, as the vicar of this town said to me, we have most need of all of a large and liberal outpouring of the Holy Spirit. My constant and daily prayer for my congregation is that they may have much of God's Spirit and presence with them. I know, and bless God for it, that I have their prayers. They have my interest in their welfare, my joy in their joys, and my sympathy in their sorrows; and better, far better, I commend them with all affection, and the earnestness of one who feels, in some measure at least, his great responsibility, to the sympathy and grace and love of Him who hath said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' I have to entreat a continued interest in their hearts at the throne of grace."

"LEAMINGTON, April, 1848.

"I was always sure Leamington was not a place for me. It is all very well to say, 'Don't talk;'—but you might as well set a child into a garden with *grosetts*, pears, and apples, and say, 'Don't eat.' It is well to remember the clause of the prayer, 'Lord, lead us not into temptation.'

"We will set off for Devonshire this day week. We go by Bristol, where I intend to stay a night, for the purpose of seeing my old friend and schoolfellow, Gibbie Lyon, on whom I have not set eyes for more than thirty years, and who, as far as I know, is the only surviving boy, save myself, of what Drummond used to call, 'Tom Guthrie's class.'"\*

"ILFRACOMBE, NORTH DEVON, April 24th, 1848.

" . . . This is a regular out-of-the-way, wild, romantic place, and would in all respects have suited me admirably but for the want of level walking, which, notwithstanding all my other improvements, I feel the need of. When I come to a brae, Miss Lockhart and David put a hand on my back, and then I get on very well. However I seldom venture out of the way of a level. In one respect, I am decidedly improved since I came here. I have been sleeping better than I have done for months, and I am now much rid of a nervous irritability, both of mind and body, which was often very difficult to restrain. I have a feeling of enjoyment of life which I take to be one of the best signs of returning health. I hold that I have great matter of thankfulness in the prospect of not being 'laid on the shelf,' and I am filled with gratitude when I think how many

\* See Vol. I., p. 36.



hard-wrought ministers have neither the comforts nor advantages which I have."

"LYNMOUTH, DEVONSHIRE, *May*, 1848.

"I cannot convey a better general impression of this place than to say that I felt not a little mortified that they had a place in England which could hold its head so high beside our most beautiful Highland scenery. At Leamington and elsewhere I used now and then to indulge in the patriotic exclamation—

'England, thy beauties are tame and domestic  
To one who has rovd o'er the mountains afar:  
Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic!  
The steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar.'

But this place took the wind out of the bag; and as I gazed up to the precipitous summits feathered with trees, festooned with ivy, and frowning with impending rocks, I felt very much as did the Queen of Sheba when she visited Solomon,—'there was no more spirit in her.' "

After spending the latter part of May near Harrow, under the roof of Mr. Elliott-Lockhart, M.P. for Selkirkshire, he went north in June to Ballater, Aberdeenshire, with his household; and thus wrote to his congregation from thence—

"I trust that, by the end of the season, I will be able to appear again in my pulpit and preach among you the word of life; and if my physical frame is not better fitted than once it was for that great and honourable work, I would fain hope I might be found in mind and heart more meet for the ministry of the Gospel of Christ, through the power and discipline of a sanctified affliction.

"Oh, for more of the Spirit's help, and that we may look more 'to the hills from whence cometh our aid'! It is my heart's desire and daily prayer, that the God of all grace would richly bless the words of His servant, my much esteemed friend Dr. Hanna, now filling my place. May he be vastly more successful and blessed in winning souls to Christ than I have been. Surely it is enough to humble us in the dust, to think how ill we have done our work; and other hope we have none than



this, that Jesus stands surety both for preacher and people; his blood is sufficient to wash away and blot out even the sins of the pulpit."

"BALLATER, *June 19th*, 1848.

"You are perhaps aware that Sir James Clark waits on the Queen in our neighbourhood. He has been kind enough to see me here twice.\* At our first interview he very quietly heard me talk of resuming some measure of work in a month or so, till he laid his ear to my chest over the region of the heart, when all of a sudden he said, 'As to the preaching, we must consider about that.' He ended by an absolute interdict against resuming work as I proposed. My heart, he says, has not yet partaken in the general improvement, at least in any proportionate measure. According to him, my ultimate chance (so to speak) of being able to continue preaching depends in great measure, if not altogether, on my total abstinence from all work and excitement of any kind for another twelve months. 'After that,' said he, 'we will be able to determine whether you may continue or must abandon the pulpit; and if you are to continue that line of your profession, to what extent it will be safe for you to do so.'

"Instead of telling you more fully what Sir James thinks, I send the letter he wrote to my brother after first seeing me.

"All is in the hands of a gracious God, and I am thankful that I am enabled to feel no painful anxiety about the matter. Meanwhile it is my plain and clear duty to use all possible means of restoring a shattered fabric; and who can tell but that afterwards I may be fit for more work than medical men at present anticipate? If not, then I will certainly feel it to be my duty, and indeed regard it as a call of providence, to retire; it will be to me as the voice of my Master saying, 'Give place to another.'"

SIR JAMES CLARK to DR. ALEXANDER GUTHRIE.

"LONDON, *June 2nd*, 1848.

"I have seen your brother and examined him carefully. I am satisfied that he has no structural disease of the heart, nor any disease except that which is the consequence of over mental exertion and *excitement* and over bodily fatigue. He will require much longer rest, and I have great doubts as to his ever being able to preach again; certainly he will never be able to do

\* Mr. Guthrie had previously consulted that eminent physician in London.



more than half of what he has done, without the risk of both heart and head being injured.

"Your brother, if I estimate his character rightly, cannot do things calmly; he must throw his whole mind into what he is doing, and so exert himself in a way that is not compatible with his circulation and nervous system. He must give up all polemics, and if he is to preach, preach calmly, and not too much nor too often."

"BALLATER, July 13th, 1848.

"When one calls up the past to review, and thinks what a solemn charge is that of a gospel minister and pastor, with what tenderness, faithfulness, anxiety, and assiduity he should deal with those committed to his charge, pleading for Christ with them, and for them with Christ, never feeling at ease so long as there is a lost sheep in the wilderness missing out of the flock,—in short, when one thinks what they *have* done, and what they *should have* done,—it sinks me into the dust, and would sink me deeper still, even into despair, but that Jesus is the refuge both for shepherd and sheep, and that His blood cleanseth from all sin.

"It was the Father's pleasure that in Christ all fulness should dwell. This *dwelling of the fulness* appears to me a very precious truth. Here, in the ravines and gulleys of the mountains, floods have flowed, but all at present to be found is a bed choked up with grey glaring stones;—not water enough to slake the thirst of a hunted hart. It is pleasant to sit down on the heather bank, in the shadow of a great grey granite rock, with the beautiful red bells of the foxglove ringing around, and think that by such a brook you are not like a poor wandering, weary-worn sinner, who has at length reached the Saviour. In him all fulness '*dvelleth*,' even the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

"I commend my esteemed friend Dr. Hanna, with all who will be assisting him, to the prayers of the Lord's people. May he have cause to bless God through all eternity for the providence which brought him among you."



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE MINISTRY (*continued*).

MR. GUTHRIE'S congregation had serious reason, in 1847, to fear that they might never see him enter his pulpit again; and it was with thankful emotion that, on the first Sabbath of October, 1849, they heard his voice once more, after a silence of well nigh two years. A few months previously, his honoured friend, Dr. Duff, had thus written from India—

"CALCUTTA, February 7th, 1849.

"MY DEAR MR. GUTHRIE,— . . . The whole of your remarkable career during the last few years I have been following with intense delight. Your Manse scheme and Ragged School have been bulking before my mind's eye in a way to fill me with wonder, ay and devout gratitude to the God of heaven, for having so extraordinarily blessed your efforts. It was saddening to think that such a voice was temporarily silenced. But it was the Lord's providential dealing; and my earnest prayer is, that this may be the *seasoning* process for still more extensive usefulness in the vineyard of the Lord. It is the Lord's way. The seed must rot ere life come out of it. What is carnal in us must be mortified ere some fresh burst of life manifest itself. And from my own experience, I find that a season of affliction and inward humiliation usually precedes some development of spiritual energy in advancing the cause of the Lord.

"Yours affectionately,  
"ALEXANDER DUFF."

In April of the same year. the degree of Doctor



in Divinity was conferred on Mr. Guthrie by his *Alma Mater*, the University of Edinburgh. The name of another Non-established minister, Rev. J. Smart, of Leith, was associated with Mr. Guthrie's on this occasion; and the personal gratification which the distinction gave him was enhanced by the circumstance that it was the first time since the Disruption that the Senatus had conferred a degree in divinity on any minister outside the pale of the Church of Scotland. The letter of Principal Lee, informing Mr. Guthrie of having proposed his name to the Senatus, was singularly graceful and kind.

For one sermon each Lord's day Dr. Guthrie now found himself able;—more he dared not attempt. He had judged rightly when, a year previously, he wrote:—“God knows best; still I have an idea, and it grows stronger instead of weaker, that I have that about my heart which I will carry with me to my grave. I will not henceforth be able for *rough* work; and indeed I won't attempt it.”

It became thus of the greatest consequence to the congregation and to himself to secure a suitable co-pastor for St. John's; and the circumstances which led to his being associated with his future colleague were often dwelt on by him with gratitude to the wise providence of God. The Rev. William Hanna, LL.D., while engaged on his great work, the Memoirs of his illustrious father-in-law, Dr. Chalmers, had resigned his country charge. From June to November, 1848, he



officiated in St. John's, during Dr. Guthrie's absence, with entire acceptance to the congregation; and to him accordingly they now turned. The sanction of the General Assembly had first, however, to be obtained. Collegiate charges are by no means rare in the Free Church nowadays; but at that early period of her history she set her face against them; and the General Assembly made an exception in this case only on the ground that Dr. Guthrie had suffered the loss of health in the Church's service, and in consideration of his great exertions in connection with the Manse Fund. The matter came, according to Presbyterian order, first before the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh:—

“EDINBURGH, *February 28th*, 1850.

“I appeared for the first time these two years past before the Presbytery yesterday, with papers connected with our projected collegiate charge. Everything promises well. Unless I had got the arrangement made, I would certainly have retired from St. John's. We cannot get Dr. Hanna till the end of the year; but meanwhile we can say as the Irishman did who had his cow on the bare top of a lofty hill:—when some one said, ‘I fear she has little to eat,’—‘Very true,’ replied Paddy, ‘but if she has poor pasture, she has a *fine prospect*!’

“If this arrangement takes place, I trust through the Divine blessing it will be a happy one to me, and a blessed one to my people.” (*To Mr. Fox Maule.*)

Dr. Hanna was “inducted” on the 7th November, 1850. “It was my happy privilege,” he wrote, after Dr. Guthrie's death, “counted by me among the greatest I have enjoyed, of being for fifteen years his colleague in the ministry of Free St. John's, Edinburgh. To one coming from a remote country parish, ten years



residence in which had moulded tastes originally congenial with its quiet and seclusion into something like a fixed habit of retreat, the position was a trying one—to occupy such a pulpit every Sunday side by side with such a preacher. But never can I forget the kindness and tenderness, the constant and delicate consideration, with which Dr. Guthrie ever tried to lessen its difficulties and to soften its trials. Brother could not have treated brother with more affectionate regard.”

From the day of his return to his pulpit till his final retirement in 1864 his reputation as a preacher, instead of diminishing, seemed, if that were possible, to be ever on the increase. Again to quote the words of his colleague:—“I believe there is not on record another instance of a popularity continued without sign or token of diminution for the length of an entire generation. Nor is there upon record the account of any such *kinds* of crowds as those which constituted continuously, for years and years, Dr. Guthrie’s audiences in Free St. John’s. Look around, while all are settling themselves; you have before you as mixed and motley a collection of human beings as ever assembled within a church. Peers and peasants, citizens and strangers, millionaires and mechanics, the judge from the bench, the carter from the roadside, the high-born dame, the serving-maid of low degree—all for once close together.”

This description was most strikingly realised in the months of August and September, when Edinburgh is



filled with strangers, but when most of the city ministers take their holiday. "I think these two months," Dr. Guthrie wrote, "in a sense, the most important of the year. I know that many hear me then who are not in the way at other times of hearing a sound Gospel preached." So in another letter, written in a previous September, he tells of "a vast number of strangers in church, among others ——, the great surgeon. Professor Miller, with whom he came, said that —— had not been in church before for thirty years." An English stranger would probably have been almost as much amazed to discover (as he might have done on more than one occasion) another celebrity, the late Dr. Samuel Wilberforce, when Bishop of Oxford, among the worshippers in that unconsecrated building.

"*Edinburgh, 1851.*

"I should have dined with Thackeray, the celebrated *littérateur*, at Professor Gregory's last week, but could not. He was in church on Sabbath with Robert Chambers. Very odd it was, that I began my discourse by allusion to an awful and sublime picture, which appeared in *Punch*, some years ago, called, 'The Poor Man's Friend.' A wretched old man is pictured a corpse, on a miserable bed, in a miserable garret, with no one there but (wrapt in a winding-sheet with his skeleton face only seen) a figure of Death. I paid some compliments to the genius and humanity of the picture and author, but desiderated some evidence that that dead old man was a Christian, before I could say that Death was his friend. The idea, it appears, was Thackeray's, as also the lines illustrating it.

"Thackeray had never been in Scotland before, was struck with Scotch preaching, and wished to see me; so they arranged that I should have an hour's talk with him at the Ragged School. There I 'charged' him with my views of the remedies for our social ills (as I know that he has a deal of influence among the literary and upper circles of London). While talking to him



who comes in but Tufnell, one of the Privy Council. He was much interested ; and I have I hope sent them both up to do some service at head quarters. Humane, kind-hearted man Thackeray, near as big as you. Tufnell, sharp as a razor."\* (*To Provost Guthrie.*)

But, apart from such notable strangers as thus came casually under Dr. Guthrie's influence as a preacher, there were among his regular hearers some with whose names Scotland and Edinburgh will long be associated. "There was in the crowd at St. John's," writes Dr. Hanna, "always one conspicuous figure. Looking only at the rough red shaggy head, or at the checked plaid, flung over the broad shoulders, you may think it is some shepherd from the distant hills, who has wandered in from his shieling among the mountains to hear the great city preacher. But look again ;—the massy head, the broad projecting brow, the lips so firmly closed, the keen grey eye, and, above all, the look of intelligent and searching scrutiny cast around, all tell of something higher than shepherd life. It is Hugh Miller, the greatest of living Scotchmen, never to be missed in this congregation, of which he was not only a member but an office-bearer."

Of Dr. Guthrie's sketch of that remarkable man a few sentences have been already quoted.† The remainder may be best inserted here :—"Much of

\* This letter omits to mention how much Mr. Thackeray was touched by the spectacle he saw in the Ragged School. Turning to Dr. Guthrie, as we have heard the latter tell, with the tears in his eyes he said, "This is the finest sight in Edinburgh!"

† In Chapter V.



Miller's power lay in the way the subject on which he was to write took entire possession of his mind. For the time being, he concentrated his whole faculties and feelings on it; so that, if we met a day or two before the appearance of any remarkable article in the *Witness* newspaper (of which he was editor), I could generally guess what was to be the subject of his discussion, or who was to be the object of his attack. From what-over point it started, the conversation—before we were done—came round to that; and, in a day or two, the public were reading in the columns of the *Witness* very much of what I had previously heard from his own lips. The subject took possession of him, rather than he of the subject.

“This reminds me of an occasion on which Macaulay showed the same power and peculiarity. I was sitting one night in the House of Commons, when he, observing me, left his seat, and came to sit beside me. An extraordinary talker, he did not leave me a chance of hearing what was going on in the House; but poured forth into my ear in full flowing stream his views on National Education,—the subject which had taken me at that time to London, and which the House was to take up for discussion in a day or two thereafter. Well, I was not a little interested, and much amused, to find in the newspapers I bought on the morning of my leaving London, the very sentiments—in many instances, the very expressions—addressed to the House, which Macaulay had already spoken in my ear.



"There was another remarkable point of resemblance between Miller and Macaulay, as well as some other two or three eminent men I have known (as, for instance, Sir George Sinclair and Principal Cunningham),—they seemed never to forget anything they had seen, heard, or read.

"Cunningham's memory was wonderful, even to the holding fast of what might be considered unimportant and uninteresting details. On our way to London, after the Disruption, to raise friends and money there in support of our Free Church, we took a route that was new to me. He had travelled it once, though a considerable number of years before; yet—telling us that at the next turn we should see such and such a hill, or such and such a church, or such and such a house—he seemed to be as well acquainted with the road as any coachman of a public stage is with the one that he travels every day.

"Then, during many years of intimacy with Sir George Sinclair, and occasional holidays spent with him at Thurso Castle, I never ceased to be astonished at his amazing stores of knowledge, and the propriety and readiness with which he revealed them.\* It was hardly possible to start any topic for discussion which he did not garnish and adorn with some apt quotation from a Latin, or French, or German poet.

\* In 1851 we find Dr. Guthrie writing to Sir George:—"I have long wondered at the extraordinary power you have of happily and pithily applying Scripture. Many years ago I remarked, in the writing on your Bible, signs of close and careful study. In addition to this, have you followed any plan to which you can refer the enviable faculty you have?"



"Let it suffice that I give one example illustrative of Miller's gigantic memory. We were sitting one day in Johnstone's (the publisher's) back shop, when the conversation turned on a discussion that had recently taken place in the Town Council, on some matter connected with our Church affairs. Miller said it reminded him of a discussion in Galt's novel of 'The Provost;' and thereupon proceeded, at great length, to tell us what Provost this, and Bailie that, and Councillor the other, said on the matter; but when he reached the 'Convener of the Trades,' he came suddenly to a halt. Notwithstanding our satisfaction with what he had reported, he was annoyed at having forgotten the speech of the Convener; and, getting a copy of the novel from the shelves in Johnstone's front shop, he turned up the place and read it, excusing himself for his failure of memory. But what was our astonishment, on getting hold of the book, to find that Miller had repeated pages almost verbatim, though it was some fifteen years or more since he had read the novel!

"Hugh Miller's death by his own hand, though I felt as an awful shock, distressed more than it surprised. Even before his brain was examined, and other instances made the fact clear, I never had the faintest doubt that he was insane when he took his life.

News of his death was waiting me at the railway on my return from a public dinner, given at the honour of Mr. Arthur Kinnaird. I imme-



diately hurried down to Miller's house in Portobello, but did not know, till I had left it, that his death was the work of his own hand. Whatever suspicions might have passed across my mind, I refused to yield to them, believing, as Mrs. Miller and the family then did, that his death was accidental. But that night I learned, to my horror, from his step-brother, that it could not have been so, there being no mark showing that the bullet had passed through the thick seaman's jersey which he wore.

"On my return to the house next day, I had two very painful duties to perform.

"The first was, at the request of his eldest daughter, a very amiable as well as able young creature, to go up to the room where her father lay, and cut off a lock of his hair for her. I shall never forget the appearance of the body as I entered the room and stood alone by the dead: that powerful frame built on the strongest model of humanity; that mighty head with its heavy locks of auburn hair; and the expression of that well-known face, so perfectly calm and placid. The head was a little turned to one side, and the face thrown upwards; so that it had not the appearance of an ordinary corpse, but wore something of a triumphant, if not a defiant, air, as if he were still ready for battle in the cause of truth and righteousness—defying his enemies to touch his great reputation as a man of the highest eminence in science, of the most unblemished character, of the most extraordinary ability, and, more than any one of his contemporaries, entitled to be called a defender of the faith.



"In justice both to him and to religion, it was considered necessary that a post-mortem examination of the body should be made—that if, as was probable, the brain should be found diseased, that might be made known, and thus, along with other circumstances, remove the last lingering suspicion against Miller which the event might have raised, or his enemies been ready to take advantage of. Mrs. Miller, still ignorant of the real nature of the case, was averse to the body being touched, in the belief, on her part, that his death was purely accidental. In order to get her consent, I had to undeceive her by producing that fond but fatal note which he had left on his desk, addressed to her, expressed in terms of his highest confidence in Jesus Christ, but at the same time plainly intimating his intended purpose, probably executed before the ink on that paper was dry. I shall not soon, indeed I shall never, forget the face that looked up to mine, and the cry of agony with which the news, though communicated on my part with all possible delicacy, was received.

"Next day the examination was made by Professor Miller. To his study Dr. Hanna and I went at an appointed hour to wait his return and receive his medical report, with the view of Dr. Hanna's embodying it in an exquisitely beautiful and able article which he had prepared for the columns of the *Witness* newspaper. The hour came, but not the Professor; and it was not till after one, and another, and another additional quarter of an hour had passed, that the door flew open, and, with



a countenance pale as death, he, rushing in, astonished and alarmed and horrified us by throwing up his arms to heaven to exclaim, 'Tragedy upon tragedy!' Finding the revolver, which had killed Miller, in the room beside the body, he had brought it away with him in his pocket. Passing a gunsmith's shop in Leith Walk, he went in to have the pistol examined. He put the revolver into the shopman's hand; saw him look down one barrel after another; then, a loud explosion!—and the living man, without cry or sigh or groan, folded in two and dropped on the floor dead as a stone.

"Having satisfied ourselves, we published documents which satisfied the public that Hugh Miller's reason had given way, and that he was in no respect responsible for the deed he had committed."

Not far from the spot in St. John's Free Church where Hugh Miller sat, the stranger could scarce fail to take note of another head as large, and with locks as shaggy, as Miller's, but raven black. It belonged to another member of Dr. Guthrie's congregation, Sir James Y. Simpson, whose name will be ever dear to suffering humanity. Miller and Simpson sat in the area of the church—almost beneath the pulpit; and as we lift the eye to the gallery on the left, two other remarkable countenances attract attention. The eyes of both are piercing and brilliant, and, with a gaze that never relaxes, are fastened, from the commence-



ment of the sermon to its close, on the preacher. Both are judges of the Supreme Court in Scotland; the younger of the two, Lord Rutherford,\* who had fought alongside Fox Maule the battle of the Church on the floor of the House of Commons; the other, with the high dome-like head, and solemn, almost pensive air, is Henry Cockburn. "Cockburn," wrote Dr. Guthrie, "was a man of fascinating manners and fine genius; the greatest orator, in one sense, I ever heard. His looks, his tones, his language, his whole manners, were such as to make you believe for the time that he spoke *ab imo pectore*,—he himself believing every word he said.

"On one occasion, indeed, he failed to convince the judge and jury of the innocence of a man for whom he was counsel, and who had committed an atrocious murder :

\* "Walking down from church with Lord Rutherford, after hearing Dr. Guthrie," writes Lord Ardmillan, "we were speaking of a passage in the sermon of which, so far as I recollect, these were the words: 'Professions are easily made, but, trial tests sincerity. Any man can be the friend of religion when religion is respectable or fashionable, and a man's worldly prospects are improved by a religious profession. Give me the man who is the friend of religion when her back is at the wall. I see before me two soldiers on a day of review. Both are armed and helmed and plumed alike; each has a soldier's garb, a soldier's bearing, and a soldier's arms; but on that day of peaceful pageant I cannot tell which has a soldier's heart. I see them both again on a day of battle; the one, foremost amid the brave, mounting the deadly breach, "seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth!" the other, *foremost too*, as with trembling limbs and pallid cheek he is borne onwards, like a weed on the surface of the billows, by the crash of gallant men behind him; on that day of trial how easy to tell beneath whose martial dress there beats a soldier's heart!' Speaking of this passage, Lord Rutherford, an admirable judge and critic of eloquence, remarked, 'Any man could have painted the coward hiding or flying, or keeping in the rear; but to describe him as foremost in the onset, against his will swept on and sustained by men braver than himself, was a stroke of rhetoric of the highest order.'"



but he did something still more extraordinary,—he convinced the murderer himself that he was innocent! Sentence of death having been pronounced, and the day for execution fixed (say the 20th of January), as Cockburn passed the culprit, not yet removed from the dock, the latter seized him by the gown, saying, ‘I have not got justice, Mr. Cockburn;’ whereupon, Cockburn, who could not resist passing a joke on any occasion, replied, as he shrank from the murderer’s touch, ‘Perhaps not: but you’ll get it on the 20th of January.’”

A still more famous Scottish Judge, with whose name Cockburn’s is closely associated, was Francis Jeffrey. A former chapter presented evidence of that eminent man’s esteem for the subject of this Memoir; in the succeeding one, the reader will find Dr. Guthrie’s account of a meeting between Jeffrey and himself in a fragment designed for insertion in his Autobiography;—its concluding paragraphs may best be given here:—

“I was asked by his family to officiate at the funeral of Lord Jeffrey—a request that put me in a more trying position than almost any circumstance in my life which had occurred before or has occurred since. Fortunately for me, the gentleman, a near relative of the family, who was the bearer of their request, was a devout Christian and an able man. I frankly unbosomed myself to him, telling that while I considered this request an honour, I felt it one which imposed on me a very difficult duty. Lord Jeffrey was a member of no Christian Church; he did not even attend any; and from these and other cir-



cumstances many believed him to be a confirmed sceptic. 'I am anxious,' I explained to this gentleman, 'on the one hand, in my prayers and otherwise, to avoid the use of one word that could hurt the feelings of his family ; on the other, I am bound in duty to my Master and to the truth, and to the interests of those who are present—all of whom will keenly watch what I say in this matter, and some of whom will watch for my halting, as a flatterer or a time-server—to say nothing that might encourage scepticism, or make it appear a matter of indifference whether a man did or did not make a Christian profession.'

" This brought out to me a very interesting account of Lord Jeffrey and his state of mind,—leading me to draw up a prayer, the only one I ever formally composed and committed carefully to memory.\* I was assured then, as I had been assured by Lord Dundrennan years before, that, however much he might differ from me and others on some particular points, Lord Jeffrey was not an unbeliever. Professor Miller, who was his physician, told me some time thereafter, that when in attendance on him during his lingering illness, he found him engaged in reading the Bible, on which he descanted with manifest pleasure and amazing volubility. The gentleman who waited on me at the request of the family, told me that Lord Jeffrey entertained some peculiar views, stag-

\* That prayer had struck the late excellent Mr. Cleghorn, Sheriff of Argyllshire, so much, that among his private papers, opened after his death a few months ago, the substance of it was found written from memory after his return from the Dean Cemetery.



gered at some doctrines or points usually accepted by Christians ; but what they were, not any of Lord Jeffrey's most intimate friends ever certainly knew. Given out to the world, they might have disturbed the faith and confidence of some good Christian people ; so, not considering them of sufficient importance to warrant the risk and chance of doing that, he had resolved to keep them to himself and have them buried with him in his grave.

“ What a beautiful contrast does this forbearance and silence of Lord Jeffrey,—this tender regard for the feelings, the peace, and hope of many good Christians,—present to those who are constantly running after novelties in religion, casting out their doubts on the most sacred subjects, disturbing the peace of Christians, and giving utterance to crude and undigested notions and nostrums of their own on the divinity of our Lord, the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the extent and nature of the atonement,—notions which they may be found holding to-day and abandoning to-morrow ! ”

To “ testify the Gospel of the grace of God ” was to Dr. Guthrie always and everywhere a hallowed joy ; and, while he felt more at home under the gothic canopy of open-work which surmounted his own pulpit than anywhere else, he proclaimed the unity of the faith both in this and other lands by gladly preaching for ministers of almost all the evangelical churches, and welcomed them



when they preached for him. In a letter of 1856, after mentioning that on the previous Sunday forenoon a clergyman of the then Established Church of Ireland had filled Dr. Hanna's place, he adds:—"In the afternoon I recommended the cause he is here to advocate, dwelling strongly on the pleasant spectacle of an Episcopalian in our pulpit. I did so with special satisfaction, as Mr. Gladstone was in my pew."

One natural result of the Disruption was, to bring the ministers of the Free Church into greatly closer intimacy with their dissenting brethren. After 1843, consequently, we find Dr. Guthrie often occupying their pulpits. It was on occasion of one of these friendly services that a ludicrous incident occurred, which he thus described in writing to Provost Guthrie—

*"November 5th, 1844.*

"I preached the other Sabbath evening in Albany Street Chapel.\*

"I took John Towert (his beadle), as usual, with my gown, cassock, bands, and thin shoes; and was in the act of pulling off my coat, when I saw some of the deacons eyeing my paraphernalia very sad like. Immediately it occurred to me that they might not like a gown. 'Gentlemen, any objection? As to me, it is a matter of moonshine.' 'We would like you, sir, as well without.' So away go the gown and cassock. Mechanically I began putting on the bands, and saw them looking at me as if I were cutting my throat. 'Any objection, gentlemen?' 'We would be better pleased without them.' Away go the bands; and then John (who was looking awfully wicked at the honest men) produced my thin shoes. 'Any objection to these, gentlemen?' as I held the slippers forth. This fairly tickled them; and these grave deacons exploded into a laugh most loud and hearty."

\* A Congregationalist place of worship, where all distinctive pulpit costume was avoided.



But while the Disruption drew Free Church ministers into more cordial relations with other nonconformists,\* their attitude towards the Establishment which they had quitted was, in the case of the great majority, one of estrangement in corresponding degree. An interchange of pulpits between ministers of the Free and Established Churches is, nowadays, at least an occasional event; but twenty years ago scarcely to be thought of. Nay, when, on a certain occasion in 1856, Dr. Guthrie consented, at the request of the Committee for Moravian Missions, to preach a public sermon on their behalf in a large city church belonging to the Establishment, although the service was on a week-day, so seriously annoyed was the eminent minister who had left that church at the Disruption, that he wrote Dr. Guthrie a remonstrance on the following day. Here is Dr. Guthrie's reply:—

“MY DEAR DOCTOR,—None who happen to know (and it is pretty generally known) the steadiness with which, throughout the Church controversy, I adhered to what many accounted extreme views, but which events have proved to be sound ones, will suspect that I have abandoned ‘the truth, on account of which we took up our position.’ I embraced these opinions in

\* The remark applies to Nonconformists across the border likewise. Dr. Guthrie preached for English United Presbyterians, Baptists, and Independents frequently; and in the *Watchman*, the official organ of the Wesleyan Methodists, we find the following statement:—“Dr. Guthrie's cordial love of Wesleyans, and the Wesleyan Churches, was uniform and practical; he sympathized with us, affected our society, and loved to mingle in our assemblies. He was wont to welcome to his house, year by year, the deputations to Scotland from the Wesleyan Missionary Society. On two occasions he preached the annual Friday morning sermon before the Society, and more frequently than in the case of any other denomination, except his own, occupied Wesleyan pulpits, both in the metropolis and in the larger provincial towns.”



early life, I have adhered to them through foul and fair weather in manhood, and, unless I am already *dotted*, I am not likely to desert them now in my grey hairs. That is the way the public will reason.

"The sooner we get our people to understand (if they don't understand it already) that our principles are in no respect compromised by doing what I did in Old St. George's, and what I had done months ago in South Leith, by preaching for a Christian mission in the building belonging to any Christian denomination which the parties interested in the Mission considered most convenient for the purpose, so much the better—so much the better for the interests of Christian love, of Presbyterianism and of Protestantism, and so much the better also for the success and extension of the Free Church. I may be wrong in this, but such is my deliberate opinion; and as you have been frank and kind enough to let me know your views, I think it but a right return to let you know mine.

"Be assured that nothing will suffer from the business but the dresses of the ladies and gentlemen. I sympathize with them in their complaint. They brought away from the seats an extraordinary quantity of dust!

"Yours with great regard,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

Few ministers of any denomination have enjoyed opportunities more varied than Dr. Guthrie of preaching the gospel in interesting and unusual circumstances—at sea and on shore, at home and in foreign lands. What strange variety, too, in the audiences he addressed! But, for them all, he had one and the same message; and his experience in the ministry ever deepened his conviction of the Divine adaptation to human need of that instrument which meets with equal fitness every case, how diverse soever the outward surroundings may be.

Writing home, while on a visit in 1854 to a noble family in Rutlandshire, he tells:—"On Thursday evening I held a 'conventicle' in the great room of the o



Hall. Strange to say—or as the old barons who lie there in marble, had they the power of hearing and speech, would have said, ‘strange to *hear*’—the parish church bell rung for our conventicle. We had the parish organist to precent. All in this house attended, and, besides some two hundred or three hundred people, we had two Episcopal ministers and a Wesleyan. . . . The glades among the wide-spreading oaks of the park here (Exton) are exquisitely beautiful; and as the herds of deer go bounding on the green sward below, I am ever and anon reminded of Robin Hood and his ‘merrie men,’ or of the opening scene in ‘Ivanhoe.’ ”

It was with peculiar interest that Dr. Guthrie occasionally returned to his old parish in Forfarshire, and broke again the bread of life to the country people there. In a letter to Mrs. Guthrie from Arbirlot, dated 25th May, 1857, he described one of these occasions, and added : —“It is very sweet down in the Den (dell) here. The first morning I got up at four. There were the *doos currooing*; the primroses dotting the opposite bank; the plane-trees; the song of larks overhead, and the musical rush of the Elliot at the old mill; all the same, apparently unchanged, as we used to see and hear them twenty-seven years ago. It was very strange to look out on all this, and difficult not to fancy that the intervening period had been a dream!” Four years thereafter, he happened to preach in Arbroath, the neighbouring town. “I intimated at the close,” he writes, “that I would like to see any of my old Arbirlot people, and had a gathering of them.



It was very gratifying, solemn, and affecting. Boys and girls grown up into fathers and mothers; the stout and mature, now grey and bent, stooping to the grave." (*To Mr. J. R. Dymock.*)

Again, from Ackworth Park, near Pontefract, August 12th, 1858—

"The chapel in whose opening services I was called to take a part is a perfect delight to preach in. Wonderful to see, in the afternoon of a busy harvest day it was filled, and in the evening crowded to overflowing. I never preached with more pleasure—seldom with so much. A fine, intelligent-looking people; they had a deal of lively Methodist feeling in their faces, and seemed ready often to burst out into an audible assent or expression of sympathy. I could not but envy the state of mind of one man especially who was right before me. He sang the hymns with a face luminous as Stephen's, and, as I preached, every feeling that passed over his heart was expressed in his countenance. I was much gratified by not a few men and women coming up to shake hands with me and thank me when the services were over.

"Yesterday, at dinner, we met a very agreeable and excellent man, the vicar of —, who said to some of them how vexed he was, that owing to the prejudices of his Church and brethren he dared not come and hear me. What a wretched system of bondage!"

Dr. Guthrie's influence as a minister was largely augmented by the estimation in which he was held alike for his philanthropy and catholic spirit. It was his position in these respects, probably, as much as his eloquence in the pulpit, which led to his being selected to open the Tricentenary of the Scottish Reformation held in Edinburgh by a sermon in 1860, and in the previous year to perform a similar service at the inauguration of the Chambers's Institute at Peebles.



He had an abhorrence of war; yet few things did he enjoy more than to read narratives of sieges, or to hear one of his elders, an old Waterloo captain, describing the memorable 15th of June, as he "fought his battles o'er again." A favourite brother of his own had been an officer; and for soldiers, as a class, he had a great liking. He visited Aldershot Camp in 1861, on the invitation of an old friend of Brechin days, Rev. Francis Cannon, Presbyterian chaplain to the troops; and was accompanied on the occasion by Mrs. Guthrie. How much interested he was by the glimpse he then got of camp life, and still more by the evidence he found, in godly officers and men, of a true "Church in the Army," the following letter shows:—

"LONDON, *April 15th*, 1861.

"MY DEAR TOM,—Your mother and I left the Camp this morning with the good wishes of a number of worthy, kind, and new acquaintances. At night, Aldershot is as quiet as *Inchgrundel*. You are among thirteen thousand soldiers, and there is not a sound, save, when you get outside, you may hear the tramp of a sentinel.

"At half-past five A.M., yesterday, I was lying awake, when, all of a sudden the earth seemed to explode. Such a roar and shock! It was the morning gun, which stood but a few yards from Mr. Cannon's hut, where your mother and I were sleeping. On Saturday evening I attended a religious meeting of a number of the officers, over which General Lawrence generally presides. I was much gratified to find in a large hut a number of officers seated round a table, each with his Bible in hand, going over a passage of Scripture. On Sabbath morning at eight o'clock, large bodies of troops marched past our window to the Roman Catholic chapel close by, the priest of which lives next to Mr. Cannon. I was introduced to him this morning—a pleasant fellow.

"Yesterday, at half-past eleven, I officiated for Mr. Cannon.



There is no Scotch regiment at present here, which Mr. Cannon was glad of, because it made room for others. We had the Church (a large one, used immediately before our service by the Episcopalians) full to the door. Cannon was quite happy. He had never had at the Scotch service such a congregation. There were men and officers belonging to all the different corps of the service in their different dresses. Dragoons, Lancers, Artillery, Engineers, the line, and lots of civilians. Some fifty people came from Guildford, which is about thirteen miles away. I was startled when they rose to prayer, they made such a rattle of iron with their swords and scabbards. General Lawrence made me promise to return, and is to give me a *billet*. I have been strongly urged to return by many, and am seriously, more seriously than ever, thinking of addressing the public on the army; once, God sparing me, I get ragged schools safely settled.

"I returned from forenoon service to have dinner, and Lieutenant — called on me; an uncommonly fine youth. I told him of the Saturday evening prayer-meeting, and I hope he will join it. In the evening I preached at five, and had again a capital congregation. I never preached to audiences more attentive; it was quite refreshing to see their faces. After the evening service a Major and another officer came in to tea. Last, but not least, arrived Corporal Macdonald, who came up from Guildford, and whom my 'Ragged Pleas' set a-working. He has two Sabbath schools of young men and young women, amounting in all to three hundred, and is at this moment 'a light' in Guildford." You can fancy then—with my preaching twice, and talking all day, when I was not preaching, to Generals, and Majors, and Captains—that when half-past ten came, and the good Corporal left, I was thoroughly tired—slept only through last night by snatches. . . .

"I saw a most appropriate name for its keeper over one of the great 'gin palaces' here, namely, 'DEATH.'"

We add one illustration more of the varied audiences to which Dr. Guthrie was privileged to proclaim the "glad tidings," taken from the last year of his life; the sermon which this letter describes was in fact one of the very last he ever preached:—



"39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, KENSINGTON, W., February 6th, 1872.

"As a probationer and an ordained minister, I have been preaching now, in God's good providence, for forty-seven years, but never to such a congregation of sin and misery as I had on Sabbath last:—four hundred hoary and youthful tramps, beggars, thieves, and ruffians, ragged forms, crushed and hopeless-looking beings, homeless and even houseless wanderers, many of whom looked as if their hearts had never beat with hope, nor their countenances been lighted by a smile.

"The place of meeting was an upper room, in the third story of a large brick building, which has been got up chiefly through the efforts of our excellent host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Fuller-Maitland. Here, on week-days, meets a ragged school; and, on Sunday, they have the service I engaged in, as well as a great variety of other meetings. The building stands in a court off James Street, in a very low neighbourhood. A sign at the door of a barber and hair-dresser affords a remarkable but pretty accurate test of the sort of folk that haunt the neighbourhood or have their dens there. As we drove along, Mrs. Maitland directed my attention to it; and I read, besides the name and usual notice of barber above the door, on a board which stuck out from the upper part of the door jamb, 'Artist in Black Eyes.' On our return, after the service was concluded, we passed the door of the Artist in Black Eyes, and, to be at the bottom of this mysterious announcement, I resolved to go in. Apologizing for my intrusion, I explained the reason to the *perruquier*. I said I hoped he would pardon me, and have the kindness to inform me whether his art lay in so painting eyes blackened in a row as to give them quite a natural appearance? Whether he thought I was making provision for some future contingency on my own account, or had a friend who stood in need of his skill, I don't know—but the 'artist' was very civil, informing me, with an elegant bow and a handsome flourish of his razor in the air, that I had understood his sign aright.

"But to return to the mission and mission-house. The service I went to perform is intended for the 'Casuals,' as they are called—those floating wrecks of London, many of whom have slept on Saturday night in wards appropriated to their use in the London Unions, or Workhouses. As we drove up to the archway that led off from James Street, we saw at once we had reached the place. One, and another, and another miserable-looking creature was slowly, heartlessly taking their way down the lane: there was neither life in their looks nor spring in their walk; it seemed all one



to them whether they lived or died; they thought fortune had done its worst with them, and never would do better.

"On ascending the stair we turned into a large room, where a lady was in the desk, with a Bible before her, addressing some forty women; and she was addressing them to good purpose, as I found when I prevailed on her—for she had stopped on our appearance—to continue her work. At this and that close-mouth of the High Street, Lawn Market, and Cowgate, you will see one and another of such women as formed her audience, but a *congregation* of them was both a pitiful and hideous spectacle; and as I looked on their emaciated, sallow, or bloated faces, with their hopeless or furtive expression, and the tattered bits of threadbare shawls and dirty gowns they wore, I found it difficult to believe that they had ever been smiling infants, or gay, laughing, happy, light-hearted girls. It was a very sad sight; and a sad thought to think of them in the light either of this world or the next. No remedy for such a case as they presented but the gospel. What would a rationalist or even a Broad Churchman do in such a place? How utterly powerless his preaching to such a company!

"Leaving the women to Miss Stewart's instruction and affectionate appeals, we climbed another narrow wooden stair; and the close foul air which met us at the top prepared us for the scene—a long low-roofed hall, closely seated and filled to the back wall with four hundred male Casuals. On a platform raised at one end stood Mr. Hanbury, and on each side of him sat the workers in the various good agencies that are carried on there. When Mr. Hanbury had finished reading from the Bible, and they had sung a hymn, I ascended the platform to look my hearers in the face, a thing it was impossible to do without feelings of the profoundest pity and emotion. What a change from either of the two assemblies I had last addressed, and that but a few days before! It was difficult for me to believe that those before me were as much 'bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh,' with naturally as kind hearts and good heads, as the learned and accomplished men I addressed in the Middle Temple, or the splendid company that crowded St. James's Hall.

"I could not but think, as I stood and looked on these Casuals, how many ruined and unhappy homes, broken-hearted fathers, broken-hearted mothers, broken-hearted brothers and sisters, how many sad nights and days, how many prayers for prodigals, and weary waitings for their return, those before me represented; what need they had of that blessed gospel which proclaims mercy to the chief of sinners, and is able to kindle hope in the bosom of despair.



"I have been in madhouses, but don't think they offer so sad a sight as this. Yon poor maniac who sits with a paper crown on his head and a peacock-feather stuck in it, imagining himself a king—yon dame who sweeps by you with pride in her step and vanity in her looks, imagining herself a duchess, is not unhappy; happier perhaps than those who really are what these fancy themselves to be! But here, those I was about to address *felt* the iron that had entered their soul: they *knew* their misery. I preached long years ago in the Edinburgh jail in a chapel of a semicircular form, with the pulpit in the centre, and the congregation placed opposite, in ranges of large cells, open but barred, three stories of them,—eight or nine cells in each story, where the prisoners saw no one but the preacher and the ten or dozen companions each of these cells contained. When in that prison chapel I rose to give out the psalm and look my congregation in the face, the sight of these ruffian-looking men and women, with their eyes glaring at me through the bars, like those of wild beasts in the cages of a menagerie, made a great and painful impression on one who had not long before left the healthy, open, honest faces of my country congregation. But (though turned to a bad use) there was passion and power in the look of these reprobates,—that which, with God's blessing, if got hold of and turned in a new and right direction, might save them. But my audience last Sunday—these four hundred Casuals—looked as if the very life had been crushed out of them; and that for me to make *them* an offer of the gospel was like throwing a life-buoy, not to a man who is making a desperate struggle for life, but to one who, before he sinks for ever, is floating for a little in a state of entire insensibility.

"I was soon, however, relieved of this depressing feeling. I got their eyes and ears; the attention of all, and the manifest emotions of some cheered me up, and helped me on. Yet the sight was so pitiful and painful that it subjected my nervous system to a severe strain; thus I accounted for it that I felt more exhausted all through the following hours of the day than I would have done though I had preached twice or thrice to an ordinary congregation.

"The conclusion of the service was followed by what recalled the kind consideration of our Lord and the feast on the side of the grassy mountain. He would not send away the people who had waited on His ministry to hunger and faint by the way. Nor do the kind Christian friends of the Casuals. Hastily leaving the platform, I pushed my way through those who were slowly descending the stairs, till I got to the foot of



them. There I found one of the agents of the good work at his post of duty. To each Casual, as they reached the bottom of the stairs, he gave half a loaf of bread. Some put it into their pockets; some buttoned their tattered, threadbare coats over it, some more hungry wretches buried their teeth in it the instant it passed into their hands.

"I left the foot of the stair to take my stand outside in the court where I might have a talk with the Casuals as they turned into the lane that opened on James Street. They were all very civil, poor fellows. Among them all, I am thankful to say, I found but one Scotchman (though perhaps the greatest sinner of the lot). I was sorry for my poor countryman, who was a man apparently sixty years of age, and, whatever he may have been, had, more than most of them, a *douce*-like look.

"Unpromising as this field of labour is, I was glad to hear from some of the agents of the Mission that now and again those who have come there, driven by fell hunger for the bread that perisheth, have found the bread of life. These good men have found again the seed they cast on these running waters;—I say *running* waters, for (made up as it is of the wandering creatures that fill the casual wards of the unions) there is not a third of the congregation I addressed last Sunday who will be there next Sabbath day. Out of these gutters and dust-heaps of London, gems are to be found for Jesus' crown, to be to them also a crown of joy and rejoicing on that day when He makes up His jewels.

"Some few object to the plan as inducing these poor starvelings to come to hear the gospel from mere worldly motives;—an excuse ready enough to be employed by those who are ashamed to own their selfishness and niggardliness. I sought, in a conference with two of the agents, to see whether they might not, by giving the loaf first, and offering any the liberty of going away who did not choose to stay till the religious services began, give no ground or pretence for this objection. I told them how anxious Dr. Chalmers was to separate the spiritual from the secular, lest people should be tempted to sail under false colours, and pretend, for the sake of food, money, or clothing, to be other than they were—in fact to become hypocrites. I related to them a little of my experience in the Cowgate,—the story, among other things, of the old woman who, after I had spoken to her and prayed with her, burst out into an eulogium on my prayer, ending the same with this plain and unmistakable hint, 'Eh, sir, there was a man used to come and gie me a bonny prayer just like yours, and he never gaed awa' without leavin' me a shilling!'



"The worthy men pronounced any other arrangement in the circumstances impossible, and quoted the case of our Saviour, who wrought a miracle to feed the multitude who had followed him to the desert, listening to his words of life: and though I was more anxious than they seemed to be to keep the spiritual and temporal—wherever possible—apart, I furnished them with another authority, though an inferior one, in the anecdote related of William Guthrie, when minister of Fenwick. Like some other Guthries, he was fond of fishing. One day, in a lone and remote part of his parish, he found a man plying the craft by some upland stream. He proved to be one of Guthrie's parishioners, but one whom the minister had never seen at church. He frankly avowed himself to be one who was not, as they say, 'kirk-greedy.' To induce him to come, Guthrie promised him half-a-crown—a big sum in those days—every time he came to the house of God, and afterwards to the manse to ask for it. Next Sabbath he was there, and came duly for his half-crown,—the following two Sabbaths the same, but he never came to the manse afterwards. God blessed the word to him, and he became an eminent Christian—taken as it were, to use Paul's words, 'by guile.'

"So ended this remarkable Sabbath. May the fruit of it appear, though it be many days hence!"

But numerous and varied as were the audiences Dr. Guthrie addressed in church and out of it, he reached, through means of the Press, a multitude more numerous and more varied still—many of whom never heard his voice or saw his face.

He had passed middle life considerably ere he became an author of religious works. It is told of a certain powerful preacher that, when asked why he did not publish his discourses, he replied, "I cannot publish my *manner* along with them." No doubt this consideration had its weight with Dr. Guthrie; but other difficulties stood in his way.



"BRUCHIN, July 8th, 1848.

"Above any kind of printing, I have been averse to the idea of printing *modern*—I don't say *moderate*—sermons, thinking that for sermon-composition the men of the present day are not fit to hold the candle to the *masters* of the seventeenth century. I resisted, and intended to continue resisting, all proposals of the kind, till, laid aside from anything like full pulpit service, I was led to think whether it might not serve some good purpose were I to address God's people and sinners through the press. Then, secondly, though vastly inferior to others in solidity and divinity, I knew that, owing to their peculiar character and style, my sermons had, for youth, servants, and plain people some attractions. I thought, and had reason to believe, that they would read me when they would not read others far better worthy of it; and so, on a second consideration of the matter, I considered it my duty to try and serve my Master's cause with my pen. I contemplated the probability of any poor service of mine henceforth being chiefly in that way. Now, I am so much better that I expect, God willing, by-and-by, to be able again for something like a fair measure of labour.

\* \* \* \* \*

"May the Lord richly bless you, my dear friend, and do more than that—fulfil His promise to you He gave to Abraham, bless you and make you a blessing.

"With sincere esteem,

"Yours most truly,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

JOHN CARMENT, Esq., *Edinburgh*.

It was not in reality till 1855 that his first volume appeared. Considering the reputation in which he was held as a pulpit orator, and, further, that his *Pleas for Ragged Schools*, published in 1847 and 1849, had proved how attractively he could write, it is remarkable that he had been for twenty-five years an ordained minister ere his first volume of sermons was given to the world.\*

\* Before this time, in addition to the two *Ragged School Pleas*, Dr. Guthrie had published nothing except a short *Memoir* prefixed to *Sermons*



“EDINBURGH, April 22nd, 1856.

“In addition to full hands with ordinary work, I am in the Press; and what with writing out from a *bluthered* MS. all full of corrections and transpositions and interlineations (so that after some weeks it looks like a roll of papyrus dug out of some Egyptian tomb), and what with correcting the proofs twice over, I have been kept so hard at work that I did not attempt for a fortnight to answer a letter, unless it was as clamorous as an ‘Irish beggar.’” (*To Miss M. E. Lockhart.*)

It is notorious that booksellers find volumes of sermons slow to move from their shelves; but Dr. Guthrie’s first book, “The Gospel in Ezekiel,” at once became popular, and is now (1875) in its fortieth thousand.

No wonder that he was stimulated by its success. In a letter to Provost Guthrie, 12th February, 1856, he says:—“I am encouraged to launch my bark again, and indeed, if spared, will, for three reasons. First: Good may thus be done to many whom the living voice does not reach; and good done when the living voice is silent in the grave. Second: This mode of doing my Master’s work and my duty to the Church suits my age better than galloping about to meetings and scenes of excitement over the length and breadth of the land. Third: The money it brings in suits my family and circumstances.”

His next work, “The City; its Sins and Sorrows,” appeared in 1857, and, after having a large circulation, was handed over by him to the Scottish Temperance by the Rev. R. Coutts (1847); “Christ and Christ crucified,” a sermon on occasion of the death of W. M. Gunn, LL.D. (1851); a prefatory memoir to a new edition of Berridge’s “Christian World Unmasked” (1852); and a sermon on “The War in some of its social, political, and religious aspects” (1854.)



League, to be issued in a cheaper form, to which he was urged by the consideration that in this way its influence to stem the tide of drunkenness and irreligion would be widely increased. As issued by the League, its circulation has run up to fifty thousand copies.

His third volume, "Christ, and the Inheritance of the Saints," was published in 1858; it is to it he refers in the following letter to Mrs. Guthrie:—

"BRANCHIN, *November 10th*, 1858.

"I don't expect that I will ever get so much for any future publications as for the past. The public get tired of any one man, and crave variety. Supposing even that he can keep up to his first effort, any succeeding ones don't have the charm of novelty. Even Chalmers never had a sale for any of his discourses equal to his first volume.

"There was a reason, on the other hand, for publishing the volume now in the press, in this—that I have at this moment a position, in England especially, which will help the sale of it, and out of which I may be jostled in a year or two by the appearance of new men;—and as some addition to our former means and provision for the family was of importance, the opportunity was not to be lost. I hope that the Blacks have not printed too many. If in the course of time they should sell these 10,000, we would thereby add to our capital, and, considering the way ministers are paid, something was to be risked for that. If there were no objects to be looked at but those belonging to a world with which we shall all soon be done, there were reasons for publishing, though they should add nothing to, but rather diminish, my fame. I have got enough of that, and hold it cheaper than some would suppose. I prefer the fruits of it, if they are to be got in securing a decent provision for you and the children, and helping my friends if they need it. Anyway, I hope that the forthcoming book will be blessed to the honour of Christ, who forms its principal theme, and that He will use for his glory and the good of souls what I desire to lay at his feet as an offering."

Shortly after the publication of that book he wrote to



his son-in-law, the Rev. Wm. Welsh, on December 7th, telling him of favourable criticisms which had appeared in some of the leading journals, and added—

“I am thankful that, in the judgment of these parties, I have not fallen below my ‘Ezekiel.’ I don’t want to go out like an old candle,—and will stop so soon as I see any marked sign of that. It has a bad smell, and one would rather clap on an extinguisher!”

“The sale has been already great,—about 8,000. In all this, I have great cause to be thankful. I hope these volumes will be blessed to do men good, and redound to the glory of our Divine Master. That first;—and next, they will help to render unnecessary any appeal to the public for my family when I am dead and gone.”

Two other volumes appeared before his retirement from the active work of the ministry—“The Way to Life” and “Speaking to the Heart,”—both published in 1862.\*

God was pleased to give Dr. Guthrie abundant assurance that his writings were a source of blessing to souls both at home and far away. Dating from a distant military station where he was on duty, a non-commissioned officer wrote him in 1864:—“About eighteen months ago a friend directed me to where I would find

\* In April, 1858, there appeared “The Street Preacher, being the Autobiography of Robert Flockhart, edited by Thomas Guthrie, D.D.” (A. and C. Black.) In the memoir prefixed to this remarkable narrative, Dr. Guthrie writes:—“Robert Flockhart had been a great sinner, and He, who in other days had changed the bitterest persecutor of the Church into its noblest preacher, changed him into a great saint. This brave old soldier united the most ardent piety and untiring zeal to indomitable courage, and had no idea of finching, whether he was called to fight the French at Port Louis or, for Christ and God’s truth, face ribald crowds in the High Street of Edinburgh.”



your 'Gospel in Ezekiel.' I may say, any hope I have of eternal happiness (and I trust my hope is well founded) is derived under God from it. Although I have never had the pleasure of seeing or hearing you, I can scarcely restrain a strong feeling of looking upon you in the light of 'a father in the gospel.' "

"In the summer of 1865," writes the Rev. A. G. MacGillivray, "I passed a fortnight in Paris, at a boarding-house in the Rue de Castiglione. There sat beside me at dinner, day after day, a most intelligent and genial old English squire. He talked to me a good deal about Scotland, and in the first evening of our acquaintance asked me, 'Do you know anything about a Dr. Guthrie or Gut-ry, who lives in Edinburgh?' I answered, 'I know a Dr. Guthrie, a minister in Edinburgh.' 'A minister?—ah, a clergyman. Is he a good preacher?' 'A most admirable one! In Scotland we all know Dr. Guthrie.' 'Ah,' he said, 'that's the man. How I should like to know him! I never travel without having a volume of Dr. Guthrie's to read in the carriage. Why, sir, Dr. Guthrie is the only man I ever heard of who has written sermons which one can read pleasantly in a railway carriage.'

"When we parted he shook my hand heartily, saying, 'Do you expect to see Dr. Guthrie shortly?' I told him that I did. 'Give him my affectionate good wishes, and say that I pray God to bless him for making the grand old gospel as simple and as fresh to me at the age of threescore and ten as it was when I first listened to it as a child at my mother's knee.'

"Some weeks thereafter I was in Edinburgh, and dined at Dr. Candlish's, where I met Dr. Guthrie. Shortly after dinner Dr. Guthrie rose from table, and chatted with a friend at the fireside. I then told the story—to Dr. Candlish's great delight, and, when almost done, he called out, 'Guthrie, here's something for you! Hear this story of MacGillivray's.' Dr. Guthrie turned round good-humouredly. He laughed heartily at his being described as 'the only man who had ever written sermons which could be read with pleasure in a railway carriage.' But when I gave him the old gentleman's parting message he did not utter a word, but looked kindly at me with an expression of solemn thankfulness on his face."

It was with a like feeling of gratitude to God that



Dr. Guthrie heard of the favour his writings enjoyed in the English-speaking Colonies—of their circulation in the New World,\* where many of them are as well known as in the Old; of portions translated into the tongues of Holland and of France; and it cheered him, as life advanced, to know of the ever-widening circle which, through his printed works, was brought within the influence of his ministry.

Here is one incident from many in his own experience—

“PENANCE, April 4th, 1868.

“Mrs. Guthrie and I devoted yesterday to the Land’s End. The day was brilliant, and (but that the air was sharper) the blue sea and transparent sky and bright sunshine almost made us fancy that we were sojourning, as three years ago, on the shores of the Mediterranean.

“But before starting I saw a grander spectacle than Nature at her loveliest can present—a Christian whose soul was ‘dwelling at ease’ in most trying circumstances.

“I was told that close to our lodgings there was a man near to the gates of death, or rather of glory, who felt a strong desire to see me. He had read my books; and when he heard that I was here, he thought that his wish might be gratified before he died.

“In his room I found his mother and a sweet young wife of some twenty years old; he himself was sitting pillowed in a chair, a picture of ‘decline,’—the bright red and white, the large lustrous eyes, and the emaciated face and hands. He could speak only in the lowest whisper, but he received me with a heavenly smile of most perfect peace. Never have I seen a more beautiful example of the words, ‘Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.’ It was a grand sermon on that text—more eloquent and touching than any sermon!” (*To Rev. W. Welsh.*)

\* “I owe more to the writings of your father,” was the remark to us lately of the honoured evangelist, Mr. D. L. Moody, “than to those of any other man. I expected to see him when across here in 1868. I was so disappointed—he was sick—and now that I have come again, he is gone.”



Dr. Lowe, now Superintendent of the Edinburgh Medical Mission, writes us—

“During a considerable portion of my missionary life in India, when, each Thursday, our Catechists and Evangelists came to the Home Station (Neyoor) to give in their weekly reports, I adopted the plan of spending an hour in the forenoon, helping them to prepare a discourse for the following Sabbath. On one occasion, having been too much engaged to prepare a sketch of a sermon for them myself, I gave them the divisions, the subdivisions, and several of the graphic illustrations of one of your father's sermons. His imaginative style struck a chord of sympathy in the Oriental mind, and the sermon, preached to somewhere about sixty congregations on the following Sabbath, produced quite a sensation. A few days after, several of the educated natives came and asked me to read the Doctor's sermons to them in English on the Sabbath evenings. I gladly consented to do so, and they were so much impressed with them that they urged me to prepare one regularly for the agents when they met on report-day, so that they might use them on the Sabbath. I did so; the substance of the sermon being translated by me into Tamil, and written out legibly on the black board; the agents then copied it for themselves on their oleys or palmyra leaves, and it was made the subject of exposition and prayer for the remainder of the hour, while they worked it out thereafter, in their own way, in their Sabbath ministrations to their respective congregations. Thus, for many months, almost every Lord's day, one of Dr. Guthrie's sermons, adapted, so to speak, for an Indian audience, was preached in the congregations throughout the Neyoor district, and they were much blessed to the people. Several of the *sketches*, clothed with the Doctor's own vivid conceptions, were translated and published from time to time in our monthly *Christian Messenger*.

“I remember telling the Doctor about the native agents thus using his sermons; and I can never forget how, his face beaming with joy, he raised his hands and said, ‘My dear sir, I thank God for such tidings. I rejoice to know that in some measure I have helped to tell the sons and daughters of India the story of the cross.’ ‘The Gospel in Ezekiel,’ ‘The Way to Life,’ and ‘Speaking to the Heart,’” adds Dr. Lowe, “are books more used perhaps than any others by Christian laymen in conducting religious services in those parts of India where the regular ministrations of clergymen are not available.”



In 1862 Dr. Guthrie was unanimously elected, in succession to Dr. Candlish, Moderator of the General Assembly—the highest honour which the Free Church has to bestow on any of her ministers. To his son Alexander, then in a mercantile house in Liverpool, he humorously writes of the externals of his anticipated office :—

“EDINBURGH, April, 1864.

“We have begun to make arrangements for the Assembly. I have to stand in old court-dress on the Thursday evening, at what they call a ‘Reception.’ *Shorts*, buckles, shoes, cocked hat, and the whole old-fashioned dress are ordered; and I say I am to make a fool of myself to please my friends. I wanted to be rid of all these paraphernalia, but nobody would let me; Lord Dalhousie, by way of fun, threatening he would move I should not be elected, unless I would consent to conform to ancient customs! Your mother and I will have to shake hands with some fifteen hundred people at the door. Pity our hands, if they all shake with the vehemence of — the deacon! Then, we will have to breakfast about 1,500 people, 200 each morning.

“We were very glad indeed to hear of your promotion, and that you had begun to climb the ladder. Seek by daily and earnest prayer that you may be one of Christ’s true and loving followers, and, like our blessed Saviour, may grow in wisdom as in stature. May the Lord, my dear boy, keep and bless you!

“Your affectionate father,

“THOMAS GUTHRIE.”

The honour of presiding over the deliberations of the Supreme Court of the Free Church during the ten days of its Session involves an opening address, the returning of thanks as the Church’s mouthpiece to deputies from sister and foreign Churches, and likewise a second address at the close of the General Assembly’s proceedings. Dr. Guthrie embraced the opportunity this last duty afforded him of delivering his views on a



subject which had long appeared to him one of primary importance—viz., the necessity of a more adequate support for the Christian ministry.

"I have had this subject," he said, "long in my head, and long on my heart." Speaking in 1846, he said, "I pressed this subject upon Dr. Chalmers;" and, in a letter ten years thereafter to Dr. Candlish, he thus expressed himself—

*"EDINBURGH, October 23rd, 1856.*

"I wish to see your talents and influence directed to a subject which stands much in need of them. It is, that unless we get our ministers secured of a better and more suitable provision than they at present enjoy, the effect will be disastrous in the end; and, unless you put your shoulder to that wheel, I cherish no hope of our getting forward. I have been grieved although not surprised to see the disinclination, even of religious parents in the more respectable ranks of life, to educate children, who give signs of grace, for the ministry."

The more he became acquainted with the condition of matters in other Churches, the more he felt that this was a subject which all of them had need to face. This conviction was painfully impressed on his mind by an incident that occurred to him when in London in 1848 :—

"On arriving at Mr. Nisbet's, the well-known publisher's, in Berners Street, a private carriage was leaving his door, from which I saw a large bundle given out. On passing this bundle, which lay in the lobby, Mr. Nisbet touched it with his foot, saying, 'You'll not guess what that is? That contains cast-off clothes for the families of poor clergymen of the Church of England. I receive and distribute a large quantity of them every year, and they are most thankfully received.' I stood amazed at this; that men of education and accomplishments, of refinement and piety, who were devoting their strength and talents to the cause of our Redeemer, should be placed in such humiliating circumstances. It was a shame; but the



shame did not belong to them. I could not have been more grieved, but I should have been less astonished, had I known then, as I do now, the utterly inadequate provision made for many of the ministers of that Church. At this moment, out of 5,000 curates, most of whom have the feelings, and have received the education, and are expected to make the appearance, of gentlemen, many do not receive so much as the salary of a junior clerk, or the wages of a skilled artisan ! ”

The warning and appeal which he addressed to his own Church from the Moderator's chair in 1862 was unusually telling and impressive ; and we are induced to give longer extracts from it than we should otherwise have done, from the circumstance that, on his death-bed, eleven years thereafter, Dr. Guthrie not only referred to the subject, but expressed an anxious desire, if God should spare him, to press this whole matter once more on the Christian people of the land :—

“ Fathers and Brethren,—I intend to speak out my thoughts fully and frankly on this matter. My ministry is well nigh run ; the voyage of life draws to its close ; I seem to see the lights and hear the voices on the shore ; grey hairs, the long shadows, and the fast-thinning band of compatriots are voices in my ears saying, ‘ Work while it is called to-day ’—‘ Speak while it is called to-day ’—‘ The night cometh when no man can work, and thy tongue shall be silent in the dust.’ Standing as I do here, not far remote in the course of nature from the verge of another world, I feel myself above suspicion of personal or selfish motives.

“ The calamity which I stand in dread of,—next to the withdrawal of the Divine blessing, the greatest a



Church can suffer,—is that the rising talent and genius and energy of our country may leave the ministry of the gospel for other professions. Under God, there are three grand powers now moving the world—the Press, the Platform, and the Pulpit. I have no jealousy of the press and platform; but if they are allowed to monopolize the talent and genius of our country, it will be bad for the country, bad for them, bad for the Church of Christ;—a fatal day when our pulpits are proverbial for dulness, our Sabbaths are a weariness, and the highest of all professions has the smallest of men to fill it.

“ ‘A scandalous maintenance,’ Matthew Henry says, ‘makes a scandalous ministry;’ and if so, I’ll give you another sentence which, though my own, is as pregnant with truth as Matthew Henry’s: ‘The poverty of the manse will develop itself in the poverty of the pulpit.’ Genteel poverty!—may you never know it!—genteel poverty, to which some doom themselves, but to which ministers are doomed, is the greatest evil under the sun. Give me liberty to wear a frieze coat, and I will thank no man for a black one; give me liberty to rear my sons to be labourers, and my daughters to be domestic servants, and the manse may enjoy the same cheerful contentment that sheds its sunlight on many a pious and lowly home. But to place a man in circumstances where he is expected to be generous and hospitable, to have a hand as open as his heart is to the poor, to give his family a liberal education, to bring them up according to what they call *genteel life*—to place a man in these circumstance, and



deny him the means of doing so, is, but for the hope of Heaven, to embitter existence.

“An honest weaver in my native town whose minister was a highly esteemed ‘Old Light,’ and, what is more, a true light, was clear for keeping the minister’s stipend down at the lowest figure; and he alleged in proof of the advantage of a poor stipend that the Church never had better, nor so good ministers as in those days when they wandered in sheep-skins and goat-skins, and in dens and caves of the earth. If any sympathize with the weaver, I answer that I have an insuperable objection to ‘dens and caves,’—they create damp; and, secondly, as to the habiliments, it will be time enough to take up that question when our people are prepared to walk Princes Street with Dr. Candlish and me, not in this antique dress (that of the Moderator), but in the more primitive and antiquated fashion of goat-skins with the horns on! So I dispose of all such wretched evasions.

“I would not hold out any lure to avarice; I would tempt no man to enter the Church by the hope of wealth; but I wish no man to be deterred from it by the certainty of poverty. That stands as a barrier at this moment—I don’t say between the Church and the higher classes, but between the Church and the middle classes of society. I want to remove that barrier. How many noble, generous, large-hearted, Christ-loving elders have we in our Church! Yet I wish to know how many of these gentlemen (engaged in Glasgow in commerce, or in Edinburgh in the honourable pursuits of the law) are



at this moment training their sons for the ministry? They give us their silver—I want their sons. And why do I want their sons, but that the pulpits of the Free Church may be filled with a fair representation of the position as well as the piety of the Free Church? No man will suspect me of undervaluing the humbler classes of the people. If I have lived for one thing more than another, it has been to save and raise the very poorest of the poor. I believe the humbler classes of the people, in their political and religious views, to be sounder, take them all and all, than any other class. Nevertheless, I tell you plainly that to me it seems most important and desirable that there should be at least a fair number of what we call well-born and well-bred men in the ministry, to give it a tone removed from all vulgarity; or that thing still more offensive, called vulgar gentility. And let me say for the upper classes in our Church, that the humbler have no reason to fear that they will betray their interests. The men that went out to the hill-side in the days of the Covenant, and preached in the face of Claverhouse's dragoons, were many, if not most of them, what they call well-born men. The Erskines and Moncrieffs, the first leaders of the Secession, were also men of family and position; and it deserves to be mentioned that while before the Disruption there were three clergymen in the Established Church who were the sons of baronets, in 1843 they went out with us to a man. What I desire is, to see all classes in our pulpit—the piety and genius and talent of every class.



“One thing I would venture to suggest. The evil of small stipends throughout the Church will take years to mend. But what I want to know is this, why those congregations which have numbers and wealth enough to provide their minister with such an income as his position requires, and his talents entitle him to, don't do it? Why should talent and genius not insure the same measure of competency in the Church that they do in every other profession? Will any man tell me why one who brings the richest gifts and the richest graces to the highest office should be the only man so inadequately remunerated that, when his coffin is paid, the family have nothing left, and an appeal must be made to the generosity of the public? I admire the generosity that answers the appeal, but I would admire more the justice that rendered it unnecessary. I see that an elder in Glasgow has proposed that there should be some three or four Free Church livings in Edinburgh, some three or four Free Church livings in Glasgow and elsewhere throughout the Church, up to the mark of £1,000. I am not astonished at the proposal. It is every way wise. I can lay my hands on men in the Church who, if they had gone to the Bar, would have risen to the top of it, and not £1,000, but £5,000 a year would have been their income; and here (laying his hand on Dr. Candlish) is the man!

\* \* \* \* \*

“Did our youth, some years ago, leave titles, estates, luxurious mansions, kind fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers,



and blooming brides, to throw themselves on the shores of the Black Sea, and face frost and famine, pestilence and the iron shower of death, before the walls of Sebastopol? And shall piety blush before patriotism? Shall Jesus Christ call in vain for less costly sacrifices? I trust, fathers and brethren, that the words I have uttered will teach our people what is due to them who watch for their souls; and, while stirring up pious parents to give their children to the Church, will induce the children of grace and genius and talent to give themselves to the ministry.

“Let me speak to them of my Master. I have served Him for more than thirty years; my head has become grey in His service; but I can say, even when I saw how much richer I might have become in other professions, and when I felt the greatest hardships of my own, I never regretted my choice. I have been a poor servant; I have a thousand infirmities on my head, and sins on my conscience, for which I look for pardon only through the blood of Christ; but, fathers and brethren, poor servant as I have been, I can stand up this night for my Master, and say Christ has been a good and blessed and gracious Master to me.”



## CHAPTER X.

### TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

WHILE a country minister, Dr. Guthrie had, happily for himself, little or nothing to do with the habitually intemperate. Arbirlot, as he describes it in his Autobiography was a favoured parish. There was indeed a small ale-house in the village, and a public-house at one extremity of the district; but, out of a population of a thousand people, there were only one or two individuals, at most, anywise addicted to the bottle. Nevertheless, he was from the first on the watch against the destroyer. He had not been in Arbirlot a year till the ale-house door was closed; and though he failed in a similar attempt to get the one public-house removed, he used his influence successfully to prevent the existence of a second.

No wonder, then, that on coming to a large city parish, the vigilance he displayed in Arbirlot was redoubled. It needed not many days' visitation among the parishioners of Old Greyfriars, to discover that nine-tenths of the abounding poverty, wretchedness, and Sabbath-breaking were traceable to what he called "that detestable vice of drunkenness." Each year of the seven during which he



laboured among the Edinburgh poor increased his impression of the extent and appalling consequences of this vice in the localities where they dwell. "I went down to the Cowgate, Grassmarket, St. Mary's Wynd, College Wynd, Brodie's Close ;—and I found drink meeting me at every corner, defeating me in every effort." This experience not merely filled his heart with sorrow, but it "wrought" in him for his whole future life, "indignation, fear, zeal, yea revenge" against that vice. Nor was it only amid the degraded dwellings of his parish that he encountered its ravages : as minister of a large congregation, the evil thing met him in many an unexpected quarter.

"Let the reader accompany me to a respectable part of this city ; and supposing us to be now standing by the door, let me inform him that the house is inhabited by two sisters, one of whom is the widow of a gentleman who belonged to a most respectable profession. Having gone to visit the unmarried sister, I was engaged reading to her a portion of God's Word when the widow entered the room ; and although my eye as it glanced from the book caught something strange in her bearing, I suspected nothing till we knelt in prayer, when the wild muttering at my side convinced me that drunkenness was there profaning the presence of God. Abruptly breaking off, I hurried from the apartment, and having left the widow in the room, took an opportunity of expressing my pain and sorrow to the sister, who had followed me to the door. There, blushing with shame and trembling with agitation, the bitter tears streaming down her face, she briefly told me her melancholy story. 'How kind my sister used to be ! but now she is a drunkard.'

"When half-way down-stairs, I heard screams sounding as if they came from the house which I had left ; I stopped and, as I listened, they became louder and louder. I hurriedly retraced my steps, and, being fortunate enough to find the outer door open, suddenly entered the room from which the cries came. I can never forget the spectacle—it is calotypied in my mind, and is as fresh as if it had been



seen but yesterday. The widow lady stood in the middle of the floor ; her cap, which had fallen off in the struggle, lay on the carpet, her long grey hairs were streaming over her shoulders, and her eyes were shooting fire ; she was the very picture of a demon. With one hand she grasped her sister by the throat, and with the other was beating her on the head with a large key, while the blood streamed over her face and dress."

Experiences such as this forced on him ere long the inquiry, What ought I, a minister of the Gospel, to do ? During the earlier years of his life in Edinburgh he did not answer the question in the way of personally renouncing the moderate use of stimulants ; he took that step at length, however, and in doing so may be said to have been indirectly a convert of Father Matthew's :—

"I was first led," he told a temperance meeting in Belfast, in 1862, "to form a high opinion of the cause of temperance by the bearing of an Irishman. It is now some twenty-two years ago. I had left Omagh on a bitter, biting, blasting day, with lashing rain, and had to travel across a cold country to Cookstown. Well, by the time we got over half the road, we reached a small inn, into which we went, as sailors in stress of weather run into the first haven. By this time we were soaking with water outside, and as these were the days, not of tea and toast, but of toddy-drinking, we thought the best way was to soak ourselves with whisky inside. Accordingly we rushed into the inn, ordered warm water, and got our tumblers of toddy. Out of kindness to the car-driver, we called him in ; he was not very well clothed—indeed, he rather belonged in that respect to the order of my Ragged School in Edinburgh. He was soaking with wet, and we offered him a good rummer of toddy. We thought that what was 'sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander,'—but the car-driver was not such a gander as we, like geese, took him for. *He would not taste it.* 'Why ?' we asked ; 'what objection have you ?' Said he, 'Plaze your riv'rence, I am a teetotaller, and I won't taste a drop of it.'

"Well, that stuck in my throat, and it went to my heart ; and (in another sense than drink, though !) to my head. Here was a humble, uncultivated, uneducated Roman Catholic carman ;



and I said, if that man can deny himself this indulgence, why should not I, a Christian minister? I remembered that; and I have ever remembered it to the honour of Ireland. I have often told the story,\* and thought of the example set by that poor Irishman for our people to follow. I carried home the remembrance of it with me to Edinburgh. That circumstance, along with the scenes in which I was called to labour daily for years, made me a teetotaler."

"When I was a student," he said on another occasion, "there was not, so far as I knew, one abstaining student within the University, nor was there an abstaining minister in the whole Church of Scotland." Even in 1841, when he met the poor Irish car-driver, there were very few persons in Edinburgh above the position of working men who were abstainers, and these few were regarded as well-meaning enthusiasts at best. Nor might he have taken his place among them, but for an ever-growing conviction that, on grounds of Christian expediency, a stand must be made against those customs of society which, in his belief, lay at the root of the

\* Very probably on the following occasion, of which an eye-witness, the Rev. H. T. Howat, of Liverpool, writes:—"On no platform was Dr. Guthrie more at home than on that of total abstinence, and to no cause did he render more trenchant and effective service. The welfare of the poor cabmen of Edinburgh had a warm place in his heart, and one sight in this connection, engraven on memory's page, I see before me now. It was a cabmen's supper-party at twelve o'clock at night. Miss Catherine Sinclair gave the entertainment; Dean Ramsay was in the chair. Dr. Guthrie had agreed to speak. He rose at two o'clock in the morning. With these poor but honest men before him, that great master of human emotion struck the chord he knew so well—their homes, their wives, their children, their very horses. The sleeve of many a rough coat was raised to many an eye. The chord was changed, and peals of merriment rang out from these strong throats. These much-neglected men were thrilled, and many a wife and child—ay, and many a poor dumb animal itself, I can well believe,—got the benefit of that thrill for many days thereafter."



evil. The incident which follows must have happened in the year 1844 or 1845 :—

“The first time that I met Lord Jeffrey in private, was at a dinner-party in the house of my very kind friend, Mr. Maitland, of Dundrennan,—afterwards, and for far too short a time, Lord Dundrennan. This was rather a trying occasion for me, in so far as it was the first on which I was to declare myself as belonging to the—at that time—despised sect of total abstiners or teetotallers. I had become convinced that my power to do good among the lapsed classes lay in standing out before them as one who, in following Christ and for their sakes, was ready to take up his cross daily and deny himself. If I was to prevail on them to give up the whisky, I myself must first give up the wine. I had known so many instances of the sons of ministers, and of Edinburgh ministers, going to the bad ; I had seen so many of my old Divinity Hall acquaintances placed at the bar of the General Assembly, and deposed for drunkenness, and other crimes which it leads to, that, with an eye both to the good of my family and of my parishioners, I resolved to stand out before the public as a total abstainer, and to bring up my children in the habits of that brotherhood and sisterhood. I well remember yet the day and place when I screwed up my courage to the sticking point. From how great a load of anxiety and care in respect of the future of my children it relieved my mind !

“But I confess I felt it hard to have my principles



put to so severe a strain, before they had time to acquire fibre and firmness, as they had to stand at Mr. Maitland's dinner-table. Lord Jeffrey, Lord Cockburn, with their wives, and others of the *élite* of Edinburgh literary and legal society, were there—people who might have heard of teetotallers, but certainly had never seen one before, and some of whom probably never dreamed of denying themselves any indulgence whatever for the sake of others, far less for the wretched and degraded creatures who haunted the Cowgate and Grassmarket.

“ But by my principles I was resolved to stick, cost what it might. So I passed the wine to my neighbour without its paying tax or toll to me, often enough to attract our host's attention, who, to satisfy himself that I was not sick, called for an explanation. This I gave modestly, but without any shamefacedness. The company could hardly conceal their astonishment; and when Jeffrey, who sat opposite to me, found that in this matter I was living not for myself, but others,—denying myself the use of luxuries in which all around were indulging, and to which I had been accustomed, and which had done me, and were likely to do me, no harm, that I might by my example reclaim the vicious and raise the fallen, and restore peace and plenty to wretched homes,—that generous-hearted, noble-minded man could not conceal his sympathy and admiration. He did not speak, but his look was not to be mistaken, and, though kind and courteous before my apology, he was ten times more so after it. This was to me a great encouragement to



persevere in the line in which I had entered, and which I continued to follow for twenty years.

"Independent of the good it did to my family and others, it was a great personal advantage to myself. It made my health better, my head clearer, my spirits lighter, and my purse heavier. I feel sure that all parents, though they themselves might not be able to shake off their old habits (a very easy thing after all to one who has not become the slave of drunkenness), if they but knew the load taken from my mind when I first resolved to bring up my family in total abstinence, would rear their children in the total disuse of all such dangerous stimulants."

When, in 1847, Dr. Guthrie took up the case of the outcast children of the streets, he found that, in eight cases out of ten, their miserable plight was due to the drunken habits of their parents.\* "Believe me," were his words, "it is impossible to exaggerate, impossible truthfully to paint, the effect of this vice on those who suffer from it—most of all on those poor innocent children that are dying under cruelty and starvation, that shiver in their rags upon our streets, that walk unshod the winter snows, and with their matted hair and hollow cheeks, and sunken eyes, and sallow countenances glare out on us, wild and savage-like, from these patched and dusty windows."

\* In the Report of the Edinburgh Original Ragged School for 1848-49 it is stated that, out of three hundred and seventy-nine children whose names had appeared in the School Register during that year, *three hundred and twenty-seven* had been ascertained to be the offspring of drunken parents.



His Ragged School work, therefore, instead of diverting his attention from "drink's doings," greatly strengthened his dread and abhorrence of them. He lost no opportunity of inculcating everywhere the two conclusions to which he had come, viz. : first, that for personal safety it were well for all to abstain ; and second, that in view of the condition of society, Christian men, and especially Christian ministers, should in this matter set an example before those who are exposed to greater temptations than they. Still, though an earnest abstainer, Dr. Guthrie never joined those who, regarding stimulants as *per se* and in all circumstances evil, banish them from their houses. When alone with his family, no liquor was to be seen on his table, but he did not make his own practice a rule for his guests. They had liberty to take or decline wine, as they thought fit.

Together with Dr. Grey, Dr. Burns of Kilsyth, Dr. Horatius Bonar, Mr. Arnet, and others, he was one of the founders of the Free Church Temperance Society, which at one period numbered between 200 and 300 ordained ministers, and he watched with interest the progress of similar societies in connection both with the Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church. "I would rather," he declared, "see in the pulpit a man who is a total abstainer from this root of all evil, drink, than a man crammed with all the Hebrew 'roots' in the world." From 1850 till laid aside from active work, he spoke on the subject in many varied circumstances. A Students' Temperance Society had been



formed in the University of Edinburgh, the existence of which was due to the late Professor of Surgery, James Miller, one of Dr. Guthrie's dearest friends, and, with himself, one of the first of the more prominent men in that city to adopt these views. "I speak what I know," said Dr. Guthrie in addressing the students. "I have seen no fewer than ten ministers deposed from their office for drunkenness. With some of these I have sat down at the table of the Lord, and all of them I numbered in the rank of acquaintances and friends. This accursed vice has changed into ashes the laurel crown on the head of genius; and—the wings of the poet scorched by its hell-fire flame—he who once played in the light of sunbeams, and soared aloft into the skies, has basely crawled in the dust."

On another occasion we find him in the Normal School, addressing a gathering of those who are in training for teachers, and again, at the cavalry barracks, speaking to the dragoons.

"Four weeks ago," he told, "I was at Biggar Fair, and the week after next I am going to Calder Fair—not to buy *sweeties*, far less to drink whisky-toddy; but recollecting what I witnessed in my early days at the two hiring markets in my native town of Brechin, and the scenes of drunkenness, dissipation, and disorder there enacted, I will go there for the purpose of doing what I can to stop them with God's help. I believe I succeeded at Biggar Fair in keeping some hundreds of people sober, and sending them home sober as judges, ay, and more sober than judges have sometimes been!"

He was ever ready to accompany deputations to the magistrates to press for a reduction in the number of licensed houses in Edinburgh. Nothing seemed to him



more monstrous than that low public-houses should be planted in greatest numbers just where the poverty is at a *maximum* and the power of resisting temptation is at a *minimum*.

"Think of an Edinburgh Bailie," he writes, "the chain of office gleaming on his ample paunch, himself certainly a sober, benevolent, and worthy man, telling us, some years ago, that he would oppose any reduction of the licensed whisky shops; and why? because, forsooth, he knew a lady whose chief means of maintenance was the high rent which such a shop brought in. With magisterial dignity he struck his staff on the pavement, and demanded to know if we wished to break the widow's bread? Who but the worthy magistrate could have been ignorant of this, that the *argumentum ad misericordiam* lay all the other way;—that for one widow such shop maintains, it makes widows by the score; and that, to maintain one family in affluence, it reduces many to penury and clothes hundreds in rags?"

While holding pronounced views in favour of entire abstinence as a practice expedient for all, and a clear duty in the case of many, he gladly co-operated with those who were not prepared to go that length, in various movements aimed at the diminution of intemperance. He was one of the founders, in 1850, of the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness, the members of which were all more or less influential persons, but scarcely any of them save himself abstainers. In order to leaven the public mind, the first step this Association took was to issue some short, telling statements as to the extent of the vice in Scotland, and the remedial measures judged necessary.



"August 16th, 1850.

"Candlish, Norman MacLeod, Begg, Dr. Alexander, &c., have been engaged to prepare a series of publications on the different branches of the subject—each is to set up and fire a battery. Besides these large guns, we are to keep up a rattling fire of small arms.

"We are not ignorant of the difficulties and greatness of the work we have undertaken, but the evil is so monstrous and, to use your appropriate term, so *appalling*, and the very well-being of the country is so manifestly in peril, that I cherish great hope of ultimate success. I hope God has not so far left us but that we will act with the sense and vigour of 'The Duke,' who on one occasion sent forward a body of trusty men to knock on the head not some thousand men, but some thousand barrels of wine, which lay in the way of his march, and to which he was more afraid to lead up his troops, than if every barrel charged with wine had been a cannon charged with shot. It is high time to 'start' the spirit casks." (*To Mr. Fox Maule.*)

Dr. Guthrie himself opened the campaign; writing in 1850 a lengthened pamphlet, entitled, "A Plea on behalf of Drunkards, and against Drunkenness."\*

"EDINBURGH, November 1st, 1850.

"I must go out to-day† although it be only to the vestry, that I may get through with my anti-drunkenness pamphlet, which I hope will do good. Let us all pray it may be so, and be the means of saving those who are ready to perish. With sermon-writing, correspondence, a constant influx of people about this thing and that, I have not had my eyes on print for a fortnight and more—save within the boards of the Bible and on the newspaper pages.

"Lord Ashley was kind enough to come here and see me last night. We discussed many matters. I urged him strongly to commence a lay movement for the reform of the Church of England, to which he expressed himself much inclined." (*To Miss M. E. Lockhart.*)

\* That pamphlet he followed up by three New Year's Tracts,—*"New Year's Drinking"* (1851), *"A Happy New Year"* (1852), and *"The Old Year's Warning"* (1853).

† He had been confined to his house by illness.



The Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness has no longer an existence; but one important service which it rendered was in taking the primary steps to secure a legislative measure now widely known as the Forbes Mackenzie Act, whereby the hours for the sale of spirits have on week-days been curtailed (no public-house in Scotland being allowed to open before eight A.M., or to remain open later than eleven P.M.), and which has secured the closing of drinking-shops during the whole of the Lord's day. Dr. Guthrie longed for the time when a similar measure shall be extended to England and Ireland. He gave evidence before the Royal Commission appointed to investigate into the working of that Act, and rejoiced when, as the result, the publicans and their friends were defeated, and the stringency of its provisions increased. He thought that the Legislature might go much farther than they had ever yet done in the way of dealing with intemperance and the intemperate; and, among other measures, desiderated an Act giving power to place habitual drunkards under restraint, and to treat them as lunatics for the time being.

Not content with denouncing sin in general terms from the pulpit, and convinced that intemperance was a sin, above all others, insidious, widespread, and destructive, he preached a series of sermons on that vice as it exists especially in great cities, setting forth the duty of parents to train their children in total abstinence. These sermons were afterwards published in 1857 under the



title of "The City ; its Sins and Sorrows."\* None of his writings made a profounder impression, and none has been more extensively useful. It was given over by its author to the Directors of the Scottish Temperance League, and published by them at a reduced price; its circulation has exceeded 50,000 copies.

For the Scottish Temperance League he wrote two New Year's Tracts, "A Word in Season" (1859) and "The Contrast" (1860), which have been circulated to the number of 450,000. Their design was to sound a warning note against the old but odious custom among the working classes in Scotland of introducing the new year by an outbreak of dissipation. The moral of the latter tract was drawn from a tragical incident, the sight of which made a great impression on his own mind, and which, fresh from the scene itself, he thus narrated in a letter to his eldest son—

"BLAIRGOWRIE, *May 19th*, 1859.

"I addressed a great audience here on Wednesday evening. My address extended the length of two hours. The impression was wide in favour of Total Abstinence, and the result was a resolution to form a Congregational or Free Church Society. Next day horrified all the town by an event which, horrible as it is, will promote the cause here beyond all speeches, and which, coming after my address, has fastened it as by a nail driven down into the heads and hearts of the people.

"A wretched, ill-doing, drunken baker had come on Thursday morning by the train from Dundee. He had been working there, and for some days past drinking hard. He had two

\* This book was published by Messrs. A. and C. Black; and Dr. Guthrie was one day much amused, when in conversation with the late Mr. A. Black, M.P., in his publishing warehouse, North Bridge, Edinburgh, to hear a youth who had been sent from a bookseller's asking for "twenty copies of Guthrie's Sins!"



children here, boarded with a woman, for whom, spending his money on drink, he had not been paying regularly. The woman, by letter, had dunned him for their board. The two innocent bairns were crossing the bridge on their way to school in the morning when they encountered their father. He bade them go up with him and see their grandmother, who lived some mile or so up the banks of the Ericht.

"It was a roaring flood, and he was mad and moody after his days of debauchery. He took his lassie in the one hand, his boy in the other. About 1,000 feet above the bridge and the town, the banks approach, the bed grows rocky, and the whole body of the water shoots among horrid rocks, forming great black, deep, swirling pools, through a very contracted channel. They reach the place. He takes off the laddie's cap and, throwing it on the ground, says he'll buy a better for him; does the same with his lassie's bonnet, then, standing on a rock about eight feet above the boiling flood, he seizes his boy and throws him in,—he is shot off like an arrow. Some twelve feet farther down, there rises up from the black depths a rock which lifts its head about a foot above the surface, the stream roaring on each side. By a most merciful Providence the boy was whirled within reach of it; he caught it, hung on, and got upon the rock.

"This must have been the work almost of a moment; he was safely there before the wretched drunkard had had time, I fancy, to complete his work, for the boy saw him next seize his little sister, and leap with her into the jaws of death. The poor laddie called to her to make for the rock. She cried, as she floated by along with her father, that he 'wad na' let her;' and at that moment the boy saw the drowning monster actually raise his hand and press her poor head below the water, and then, in a moment, both vanished from his sight while he stood screaming. A woman heard his cries; the alarm was given, a ladder was thrown from the bank, it reached the rock—a man passed over and rescued him. He told his story to Mr. John Chalmers, who saw him and found him a most intelligent child.

"Since Thursday morning, with boats and poles and creepers, they have been seeking for their bodies. To-day Mr. Taylor,\* Miss Stoddart, and I went to see the place. As we were returning, and had concluded that in these deep dark holes with their swirling waters that have scooped out caverns below the rock the bodies might lie for ever, I saw a commotion among the

\* Rev. Robert Taylor, at that time of the Free Church, Blairgowrie, now of Norwood, London, whose guest Dr. Guthrie then was.



people that were scattered in groups all along the banks. A few steps brought me in sight of what I never shall forget. A deep hole lies behind a dam-dyke. A man had thrust a long pole into it, and when I got to the spot he was up to the middle in water, making his way to the shore, bearing in his arms the poor dead body of a bonny lassie. Her arms were extended, her head was lying on his shoulder, her face was ruddy. I thought it was a girl that had fallen in, and was not dead. But the outburst of grief, the cries and tears of women and children soon undeceived me. The body of the poor bairn, her yellow hair parted back from a sweet forehead, with a comely face, looking calm as if asleep, the face full of colour, but the little hands and arms deadly white, was laid on the bank. The sight was overwhelming enough to drive one mad with sorrow, rage, pity, horror, indignation. I spoke out to the multitude against drinking, and when one spoke of the body of the man lying, perhaps, in the same place, I said if it were found it should be hung up in chains; to which, to the credit of humanity, there was from some a loud and hearty assent.

"The only thing that calmed me was to look on that poor corpse, and think that, poor thing, this lassie was better dead than living,—with God, and in His arms, than to live and have a drunkard for her father. I expect God will bring much good out of this most horrid and unnatural tragedy. Strange that ministers will meet in General Assemblies and discuss this thing and that thing, nor address themselves aright and with self-denial to this spring and well-head of miseries and murders, the damnation of souls and the ruin of our land!

"Though I would rather not have seen all this, it is well perhaps that I did—profit to others may come out of my pain."

During the last ten years of his life, Dr. Guthrie was less able to prosecute the public advocacy of the total abstinence cause,—not because he had in any degree lost faith in those principles of patriotism and Christian expediency on which he had long defended it, but because of his own failing health, and the consequent necessity, under medical orders, to take a certain quantity of wine daily to aid the feeble action of his heart. Without ever disputing the value in certain cases of



alcohol medicinally employed, he yet repeatedly, during his later years, tried whether he could not do without it, returning to his former practice of total abstinence, and so prevent his position from being misapprehended:—

“EDINBURGH, *March 29th*, 1869.

“MY DEAR DR. MACKENZIE,—A friend of mine is at present lying in a very low and critical state, and so entirely do I sympathize with you in your opinion of the use, or rather abuse, doctors make of alcoholic liquors, that I never ask how many glasses of wine he has taken in the last four-and-twenty hours, but how many tumblers of beef-tea he has drunk. Indeed, I regard as quite shocking the quantity of spirits they pour over the throats of young people.

“I have read your letter anent the poor and Poor Laws with deep interest. I have come to be of opinion that we should have no Poor Laws at all. They are eating out the heart of Scottish domestic virtue. I wish you would publish your views and experiences. We have an Association here for improving the condition of the poor. I have just been writing one of its most distinguished supporters, that such improvements as they aim at they will never accomplish so long as drinking-shops stand thick as forest trees. The taproom is the taproot of nine-tenths of all the poverty and wretchedness of our country, and all will profit nothing so long as the dram-seller sits at the gate.

“May the Lord long spare you and greatly bless you to bless humanity.

“Yours, with the highest esteem,

“THOMAS GUTHRIE.”

JOHN MACKENZIE, Esq., M.D., of Eileanach, Inverness.

Every time he returned from the Continent he bewailed the contrast which the comparative sobriety of its gay and godless capitals presented with the shocking sights he witnessed in the streets of London or the High Street of Edinburgh.\* But he hailed the dawn of better

\* In defending his Light Wines Bill in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone said on May 7th, 1860, “I have found a testimony which is



days for our own land. Amid much apathy, both in Church and State, and but tardy progress in the public mind towards the adoption of the radical measures he desiderated, he often referred with thankfulness to a distinct change in the tone of speech and feeling on the subject of total abstinence, the subject being discussed with a candour, and abstainers spoken of with a respect, which at one time they would not have been. He was very hopeful when the Church of England directed serious attention to the subject, and was specially interested in the action taken by Convocation in the Province of Canterbury. Mutual sympathy in this cause brought him into friendly intercourse with not a few English clergymen in latter years;—among others, Dean Close, Mr. Eardley of Streatham, and Mr. Wightman of Shrewsbury, who has been so efficiently aided by his admirable wife. In a letter of 27th March, 1871, in which he described various persons with whom he conversed, when at Windsor Castle on occasion of the marriage of Princess Louise, he tells of “one clerical-looking man in the prime of manhood, who, coming up to me before luncheon, said, ‘I must introduce myself to you, Dr. Guthrie.’ This was Mr. Ellison,

entitled to great weight, coming from a man pledged by his sacred profession, eminent for his eloquence, distinguished and beloved for his virtues—Dr. Guthrie. That gentleman, in a series of remarkable sermons which he wrote, called ‘The City, its Sins and Sorrows,’ testified that he had been both in Paris and Brussels, as well as in other parts of France and Belgium, on occasions of great national festivity, and during a period of seven weeks he had not seen, whether in mountain hamlets or mighty cities, so much drunkenness or disorder as might be seen in Edinburgh or other large cities of our own country in seven hours.”



the Vicar of Windsor; and we sat down on a couch to talk over the temperance cause, and what should be done to cure our people of the vice of drunkenness. Mr. Ellison takes a deep interest in these subjects. I recommended shutting up public-houses, as we do in Scotland, all the Lord's day, and going to the Legislature to demand that it should allow no shop to be open which is opened for the mere purpose of drinking wines, spirits, or ales; that if people will use stimulants, they must buy them to use in their own houses."

Desiderating all along the entire abolition of the drink traffic, because he believed that, next to the Gospel, this was the only radical remedy, he gladly countenanced any movement devised with a view to lessen drunkenness by removing temptations to it. He hailed, for instance, the efforts made to secure better dwelling-houses for the working classes, and became a shareholder in a building investment company. In Edinburgh, he aided the now-successful movement for securing a weekly half-holiday, and would have liked to have seen the same boon secured for country people likewise. Early in 1859, the present Sir Andrew Agnew addressed a letter to "Ministers of all denominations in Wigtownshire," urging them to advocate a movement for a Saturday half-holiday for agricultural labourers, embodying the definite proposal that employers should on ordinary occasions be satisfied with seven hours' work on Saturdays. This proposal was not well received by the farmers generally, though on



the whole the idea was favourably entertained by the press. The subject attracted Dr. Guthrie's attention, and he addressed the following letter to his friend:—

“EDINBURGH, *January 31st*, 1859.

“MY DEAR SIR ANDREW,—I have read your letter with the greatest satisfaction: it is full of truth, and advocates a cause which will eventually ride over all opposition and difficulties. Why should the inhabitants or workers in manufacturing and commercial places have their half-holiday, and not the rural population?

“I believe that your proposal, besides serving a most holy and important purpose in promoting the better observance of the Lord's day, would also promote the morality of the districts. At present, *slaving* as they do, lads and lasses can only meet when the day is over, and under the cloud of night. This is the only time they have to visit each other and carry on their courtships. This leads to a vast deal of mischief. A Saturday afternoon and evening, which they could call their own, would offer opportunities of decent visiting and courtship which they now have not.

“May the seed you have sown speedily spring up, and bring forth good fruit! If you could get some half-dozen to begin, the practice would become infectious, and it would force its way. Don't despair because it finds opposition in the first instance, and yields no immediate return. The country people are proverbially apathetic and slow of change; but hold on, and it will be as with a worm we have got hold of on the morning of a fishing-day—if one does not pull too hard, but gives time, and holds on, it comes to hand at last.”

Dr. Guthrie knew human nature too well to imagine that the incitements to intemperance are to be met successfully by repressive measures; he felt that amusement of some kind people will have, and should have; he cordially sympathized therefore with every movement which aimed at devising counter attractions to those of the public-house—on this condition, however, that these can be shown to be of a healthful and innocent kind.



While in London in 1870, he thought it his duty to visit a number of the lower class places of amusement, to judge for himself whether and how far they could be regarded as answering to such a description, and whether drunkenness were likely to be diminished by their influence. The opinion he formed was unfavourable in the last degree:—"Anything more disgraceful and scandalous than the licensing of such houses on the part of the magistrates of this Christian country it would be difficult to discover. These places, licensed for dancing and drinking, are hells of iniquity; nets where thousands are snared; rocks where thousands—to the grief and death of broken-hearted parents and their own present and eternal ruin—make shipwreck. To know their results, and what intolerable *bosh* and humbug it is to speak of them as innocent amusements, of which, having respect to the liberty of the subject and the relaxation of the sons and daughters of toil, we are not to deprive them,—to see, I say, the utter and wicked nonsense of that, you have only to see, as I did, the company that frequents them.

"I wish the magistrates—by virtue of their office, instead of trusting to the reports of policemen—were compelled so many times a year to visit every place they license. We should have, I am sure, most of these places shut, and the key turned in the door of all the gin-palaces of respectable London, and of all the low drinking-shops of her mean and vulgar streets." (*To his son Patrick.*)



The fact that too many so-called places of amusement were turned to a bad account did not lead Dr. Guthrie—as some good people have been led—to give up all personal interest in the question of social relaxation; on the contrary, his anxiety was increased thereby to encourage and develop such as he could approve. With this end, he took part more than once in instituting “Working Men’s Clubs,” and heard with special interest of the endeavour made so successfully in Leeds, and since imitated in Edinburgh and elsewhere, to establish what are called “British Workman public-houses without the drink.” So too, when, in 1855, a series of cheap concerts were started in Edinburgh, and Dr. Guthrie was asked to countenance the attempt, he went; believing that, minister though he was, and Saturday evening though it was, he was not stepping out of his way in leaving his study and sitting for an hour among the sons of toil, to listen to a piano or violin, and the singing of some simple ballads. An English friend hearing of his presence on that occasion, addressed him immediately in terms of sorrow and surprise. Dr. Guthrie wrote in reply :— \*

“EDINBURGH, *November, 1855.*

“MY DEAR SIR,— . . . In my day I have had a full share of misrepresentation and abuse, and have been content to bear it, believing that I could be better employed than in setting such matters right; and that the fair character of a man engaged in a good cause would sooner or later, like a lifeboat, right itself.†

\* This letter was afterwards published under the title of “Popular Innocent Entertainments” (Scottish Temperance League, Glasgow, 1856).

† “I have given up long ago putting myself to the trouble of killing



"You ask me whether I think that amusements require stimulus. I reply, I don't think that they require *stimulus*, but I do think that they require *direction*. . . . The love of excitement is so engraven on our nature that it may be regarded as an appetite. Like our other appetites, it is not sinful unless indulged unlawfully or to excess. It is the duty of patriotic and Christian men to restrain these within due limits, and direct them into innocent channels. Indeed it would appear that God has implanted such a feeling in all his creatures for the purpose, no doubt, of ministering to their happiness. Did you ever see a kitten chasing its own tail? Were you ever amused with that? Those who are shut up for life in large towns, and never see horses but in the yoke, nor any of the feathered tribes but a sooty, begrimed, and melancholy sparrow, may be ignorant of the habits and happiness of the lower animals; but who, accustomed to the country, has not seen the crows on a summer evening, wheeling, chasing, and darting at each other in the blue sky overhead, and the trouts amusing themselves, much after the same fashion, in some glassy pool?

"To frown on the love of excitement and amusement, as if it were a sin, appears to me a reflection on Providence. I will not reject any gift which God has given, but take it thankfully and try to use it well. Take the case in hand—the musical entertainments in Dunedin Hall—which, although their harmony has been followed by so much discord, I shall continue to support so long as they are conducted as they have been begun. If the devil gave man an ear for music, and the pleasure in music which those gifted with such an ear enjoy, then let the whole affair be denounced; but if this is a gift of God, let it be consecrated to His service in the Church, and out of it also, by being used not only as a source of innocent, thankful enjoyment, but as a means of weaning or keeping ourselves and others from debasing and forbidden pleasures. This is a noble use to make of music; and I cannot take blame to myself, either for the end I had in view or for the means by which I sought to gain it, when I countenanced the entertainment in Dunedin Hall.

"Liable as I am, with others, to err, I might have suspected myself of being drawn to that Hall less by a desire for

all the lies they tell,—or, indeed, any of them. A man might as well slay away at all the midges which buzz and bite at him in the wood of a Highland glen on a summer evening!" (*Letter to The Right Hon. Fox Maule, June 24th, 1847.*)



the public good than my own gratification, but for a circumstance which I have been accustomed to regard as a small misfortune :—I only know that a precentor or performer goes wrong when he sticks ; the bars and quavers, and semi-quavers, and demi-semi-quavers of a musical piece are as unintelligible to me as Egyptian hieroglyphics ; and I would sooner hear a blackbird pipe out his evening song from the top of a cherry-tree than hear the grandest orchestra of fiddles, fifes, flutes, horns, clarionets, and drums execute the grandest pieces of Mendelssohn or Beethoven.

“ Who, however, is ignorant of the powerful attractions of music ? With the friends of total abstinence and the half-holiday movement—among whom, as true friends of humanity, powerful allies of religion, and conservators of the holy Sabbath, I think it an honour to rank myself—I felt that if we could get up an entertainment which would gratify tastes that God has given, we might preserve many from the dangers of the theatre, the snares of the dancing-saloon, and the dissipation of drinking-shops. We have public entertainments of the same kind for the upper classes in the Music Hall ; and I desire to know why the working classes should be denied the same pleasure ? Why make their lot harder than it is ? To me, one of the most pleasant aspects of railway trains and the penny post is that they have given a wider distribution to happiness, and bestowed blessings on the humbler classes which were formerly, in a great measure, the exclusive property of the rich. The men and women who earn their honest bread honourably with the sweat of their brow have no room for pianos and organs in their humble homes, nor can they afford the time or the money for forenoon concerts, and their only evening for relaxation is at the end of the week. Get them another : I would approve of that ; but let us rejoice in everything which gives them a share (after all it is a scanty one) in the benefits which their more fortunate, not more deserving, neighbours possess. I only wish that these were more equally distributed.

“ I am not surprised that you and some other good people should disapprove of the step I have taken. I took it in the full foreknowledge of the cost. Elsewhere than on railways, collisions produce a shock ; yet I hope to see as great a revolution in the minds of good people on this subject as on that of total abstinence societies, for the advocacy of which we were denounced by many whose piety I could not but respect, but whose folly I pitied when they charged us with countenancing an anti-Gospel principle and an infidel movement. It was



nothing to me to hear it told that better 'ministers than Dr. Guthrie took their two or three tumblers of 'whisky-toddy,' or to hear of the visible horror which sat on the countenances of some brethren, when a minister, a friend of mine, who is an abstainer, rose from the table, with its steaming mug and toddy-tumblers, to seat himself at a piano, and sing a sweet, pure Scottish melody. . . .

"Most respectfully, but very earnestly, would I beseech you, and others like-minded, to consider whether the interests of religion and morality are not more likely to be promoted by ministers and religious people taking an interest in such innocent amusements, than by their standing aloof with a sour face and a frown on their brows, or by their endeavouring to dam up waters which, if not directed into pleasant and profitable channels, will break out in some mischievous, immoral, and destructive way. Some things are lawful which are not expedient; but, I, for one, have no general sympathy with the notion that other people may righteously take part in enjoyments from which ministers should be excluded for decorum's sake. That is but another phase of the old loathsome times, when gentlemen got the ladies away to the drawing-room to talk what it was not fit that a decent woman should hear. I hold that a good man should take part in no entertainment, to be present at which would raise a blush on a modest woman's cheek, or make a minister of the Gospel feel that in being there he was out of place. What is not fit for a lady or a minister to see or hear, or take part in, is an entertainment not fit for any decent, respectable Christian man. That is common sense and God's truth, or I am greatly mistaken.

"Yours very respectfully and faithfully,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."



## CHAPTER XI.

### NATIONAL EDUCATION.

It is a trite remark, that men are not to be made sober by Act of Parliament: no legislative measures, however well directed, can eradicate a deep-seated moral sore; but Dr. Guthrie looked with great hope to Government action in dealing with another matter essential to his country's well being—the education of the people — and the banishment thereby of that ignorance which is so closely connected with crime. Writing from London on 12th November, 1870, with reference to the English Education Act, he said:— “I have now seen the other curative means from which people here hope so much. I have calculated the proportion between the diseases and the remedies, and the second is to the first as a mere drop in the bucket. My great hope is, under God, in the Education Act passed last Session. If, as I hope and think, it will be fairly and vigorously wrought out, it will, I tell them here, prove itself in time the most important and blessed measure passed in Parliament since the Reformation.” His acquaintance with the degraded classes, and the interest he had long taken in the education of the



poor, deepened his conviction that out and beyond all the efforts which Churches and private benevolence can make, the necessities of the case never could or would be met until the State addressed itself to the question; and he hailed the attainment at length in Scotland of a National Education scheme, for which he had worked and waited more than five-and-twenty years.

From the date of the Reformation, thanks to the enlightened Christian patriotism of John Knox, Scotland possessed a system of education, nobly planned to supply religious and secular instruction to every child in the country; a school having been planted in each parish, and placed under ecclesiastical superintendence. From the growth of the population, however, and the many social and ecclesiastical changes which had occurred in the interval, the existing parochial schools had long failed to overtake the needs of the country. The Disruption came, and those parochial schoolmasters who cast in their lot with the Free Church were no longer suffered to retain their position in the parish schools. To provide for them, and at the same time meet to some extent the ever-growing needs of the community, the Free Church instituted, in 1843, an educational scheme of her own. The great majority of her ministers at that period were impressed with the importance of keeping up the old connection between the school and the church. Dr. Guthrie, however, had no sympathy with this view.

"I have come, on mature reflection, to believe," he wrote to the late Dr. Gunn, of the Edinburgh High School,



"that Churches, as such, have nothing to do with secular education, beyond giving to it, as to the various schemes of patriotism and philanthropy, all due encouragement. I am opposed to the attempt now making to bring all education, secular as well as religious, into the hands of clergy and Church courts, thinking that the Church of Christ cannot be too careful to keep within her own province—strictly, sternly within it—for this among many other reasons, that, doing so, she will then with more grace, more sympathy, and certainly more success, repel all foreign aggression on her own sacred and peculiar domain."

Holding these views, he contemplated, with no small regret, the circumstances which led the Free Church to erect schools of her own, and so to establish a denominational scheme. While Dr. Candlish, the distinguished convener of the Free Church Education Committee, spoke of the Education scheme as "one of the most vital and important of the Free Church's undertakings," Dr. Guthrie was unable to regard it in any such light. On this matter, Dr. Begg and he parted company with most of their leading brethren in the Free Church, and were exposed to not a little misapprehension and obloquy in consequence.

Immediately after the accomplishment of his Manse Fund work, and before he had taken up the case of Ragged Schools, his mind was turned specially to the question of a national scheme of Education. Thus, in 1846, he wrote Mr. Maule, from St. Andrews, where he was spending his annual holiday:—

"ST. ANDREWS, *September 5th*, 1846.

"Mr. Rutherford \* was so kind as ask me to spend a few days with him, when we might talk over a very interesting

\* Lord Advocate of Scotland at the time.



matter that we just entered upon—I mean education. If I am so fortunate as to be in town when you return to London, I should like much to have some conversation with you on that matter. It is one of vital importance, and presents your Ministry an opportunity of earning for themselves the highest honours and conferring on the country the most valuable benefits. I had a long and rather keen discussion with Dr. Candlish and some others anent the matter. I am confident his scheme won't succeed, and convinced, moreover, that it should not.

“In the way of a general system of education not exclusively secular, Ireland presents an almost insuperable difficulty: the people, who are divided into two parties, have two Bibles. In England, next, the way is not without great difficulties. Divided into, say, three great sects, Episcopal, Wesleyan, and Independent, though they are all agreed in the same version of the Bible, they have three catechisms. In our land, the way is, I may say, cleared and clear of such stumbling-blocks. Divided into three great parties of Established, Free, and ordinary Presbyterian dissenters, we have one Bible and one Catechism; there is no reason why we should not all meet in the same school to-morrow, the situation of teacher being open to the competition of all. If your Government are not yet prepared to dis sever the present parochial schools from their existing connection with the Established Church and the heritors, some such system as the above might be applied in supplying those educational wants of town and country which the present parochial machinery does not meet.

“I intend to bring the whole matter before the Presbytery of Edinburgh shortly after my return to town, and, from all that I can learn, I will find myself backed by the great body of the laity belonging to our Free Church, and its happy Presbyterian constitution may show its healthful character on this as on other great occasions. I am quite satisfied that the great body of our ministers will, by-and-by, come to view this matter in the same light.”

An unhappy collision which arose out of the refusal of Dr. Candlish and the Free Church Committee to sanction the appointment of the late Dr. Gunn (whose views were in favour of a national as opposed to a denominational scheme) to one of the Government Inspectorships



connected with the Free Church schools, increased the breach between Dr. Candlish and himself on the general question :—

To Dr. CANDLISH.

“EDINBURGH, *November 12th*, 1850.

\* \* \* \* \*

“I never liked controversy all my days, and such experience as I have had of it does not recommend it to me. I frankly say, for myself, that I have found it indispose me for higher duties, disturb my peace, stir up the baser passions of my nature, and expose the parties engaged in it to the risk of quarrels and alienated affections. I am now less disposed for it than ever; and, last of all, I am thoroughly averse to have any controversy with *you*. My love and affections are all against it. I say all this in the honesty of my heart. . .

“If there is to be a public controversy, nothing but dragging will bring me into it. May the Lord give peace in this matter; if not, His will be done. Come what may, believe me, with great regard,

“Yours ever,

“THOMAS GUTHRIE.”

Dr. Guthrie was fully sensible of the energy with which the Free Church scheme was prosecuted, where—by an admirable Christian education for 65,000 children was provided; but his conviction ever deepened that the very existence of the Free Church schools tended to retard the attainment of a national measure.

To SIR W. GIBSON CRAIG, M.P.

“EDINBURGH, *October 25th*, 1850.

“ . . . Thinking that the Free Church, by some of her educational movements, was rather hindering than facilitating a Catholic and comprehensive plan, I retired from the Committee. . . The present arrangements may undergo a great change in less than a few years. I hope very soon to see at least the Free Church and the Dissenting community at one on this subject of education. I don't even despair of the Established Church, although they will take, in the course of things, longer time.”



"I do not deny," he wrote twenty years later, "but am happy to know that our Free Church schools have done much good ; still, I thought they were founded on a wrong basis, in such a country as ours at any rate, and that had we gone in for a national system, an opening up and extension of the old parochial system, when these Free Church schools were started, nearly thirty years ago, we would have won the battle in a few years, and been rid of the difficulties with which we are now perplexed."

Not only did Dr. Guthrie object to the Free Church Education scheme, on the general ground that the education of the young is the business rather of the State than of the Church, but he objected to allow the divisions which separate the various Churches from each other to affect education in any shape or form. The advantage of bringing the children of different sects together in school, he thus illustrated in one of his speeches—

"Did you ever see the 'happy family' ? The last time I was in London I saw animals of the most antagonistic natures living together in perfect peace, because they had been reared together when young,—fed, bred, and nursed together. I saw the mavis asleep under the wing of a hawk ; and an old, grave, reverend owl looking down most complacently on a little mouse ; and, with the restless activity of his species, I saw the monkey sitting on a perch, scratching his head, for an idea I presume, and then reach down his long arm to seize a big rat by the tail, and, lifting it to his breast, dandle it like a baby ! This is what early training will do. Now I just put it to you—suppose these animals had been brought up according to the sectarian system, and then brought together in one place, what a row there would have been !



"I am sure it is good for children to be educated in every possible way with the children of other denominations, and I will tell you why. I know, from my own experience, that it is good for *men* to be brought into contact with men of other denominations. I have felt the good of that myself. I have had my corners and my crotchets in my day; and I think I am very free of them now. I believe that if you bring a man into contact with others, it tends to round off his corners, and rub off his crotchets like the stone on the sea-beach when it is washed and rolled about by the daily tide; it makes a nobler and a better man of him."

To Mr. Maule, in 1850, he wrote:—"The jealousies and bigotry and narrow-mindedness of many are sickening. These men are never without a pair of Free Church spectacles. I suppose they sleep with them on!" But what most of all distressed Dr. Guthrie was, that while denominational schemes of Education tended to widen the breach between the different Churches, out and beyond the influence of any Church, a multitude of children were growing up in Scotland wholly without instruction. "I long and pray for the time," were his words, "when such unfortunates will be educated by the State; nor from such prayer will I ever come down to consider schemes of sects. I don't care, if the people are saved, whether the scheme crack the crown of St. Giles', or hurl Free St. John's down the West Bow. I love my Church as well as any one, but I love my country more than I love my denomination."\* "My distinctive

\* "The appeal to the human sympathies of his audience was his chief source of strength as a speaker. When his strong voice shook, and a glance of the tenderest pity flashed from his eyes, few were not moved to tears. Speaking one day about an Education Bill just brought in by the Lord Advocate, the thought flashed across him that the Free Church had been accused of supporting it for sectarian reasons, when he suddenly



points will look small enough when I am lying on a bed of death ; and my distinctive points look little, too, when I go down among my poor fellow-creatures ; and sure I am, that if some of my friends would come with me, and spend one short forenoon in these places where I have been till my heart was like to break, and I could hardly eat the bread on my own table, it would make them agree almost to anything."

In his anxiety to secure the attainment of a national scheme, Dr. Guthrie was willing to co-operate with parties from whom, on other matters, he seriously differed. To this he refers in a letter addressed to the Editor of *The Witness* in the beginning of 1850, and in that letter, too, as will be seen, he foreshadows the very system which, twenty-two years thereafter, and at the close of a long fight with prejudice and privilege, has become the law of the land :—

To THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

"EDINBURGH, January 12th, 1850.

"My inclination, in the first instance, was to turn to the Established Church, prepared, notwithstanding all that has happened, to bury in the grave of our country's welfare the animosity and irritation that may have sprung from the past. I find, however, with great regret, that our friends of the Establishment have thrown up a barrier in the way of our co-operation with them which it is impossible for us to surmount ;—they have identified, in fact, the very existence of their Establishment with the retaining of its supremacy over the

broke off his argument, and, with tears running down his cheeks, exclaimed, 'What care I for the Free Church, or any Church upon earth, in comparison with my desire to save and bless those poor children in the High Street!' An intelligent auditor afterwards said of this exclamation, 'It was as though a shock of electricity had passed through the audience.'"—*Daily News*, February 26th, 1874.



national schools, and the exclusion of all but their adherents from the office of teachers.

"Not entertaining any violent prejudices against the Established Church (holding, on the contrary, what some of my friends count such loose and latitudinarian views on certain matters of dispute, that I have not hesitated in particular circumstances to send my children to an Established Church school \*), I hoped better things of our friends in the Establishment. Nor was it till I had seen with regret that none even of the most liberal of their leaders were prepared to abate one jot of their antiquated claims, that I felt myself constrained to abandon all hope of co-operating with them; and, in addition, that I felt convinced it was now our duty to attempt co-operation with the voluntary churches in some scheme for national education, each party retaining their principles, and each agreeing to bury their points and prejudices.

"Now in approaching our voluntary friends, we were not brought to a standstill by the barrier which prevented co-operation with the Established Church. They, forming, like that other party, but one-third of the population, met us with no claim to exclusive power; on the contrary, we and they were agreed in this, that over the National Schools the Establishment should have no exclusive superintendence, and to the office of their teachers no exclusive claim. Then, in regard to the religious element, on which we were at one with the Establishment, there appeared a common path on which we could approach the State in company with our voluntary brethren. Had they stipulated that the State not only must not include, but positively *exclude* religion, our negotiations must then have taken end; for it is plain that though some among us be of opinion that the interests of religious education would not suffer, but rather gain, by being devolved entirely on parents, pastors, and church office-bearers, yet our Free Church as a body would refuse its consent to any bill which excluded the religious element from the National Schools. But how stands the matter with our voluntary friends? They propose no such clause of exclusion. So far as I know their sentiments, it is but justice to them to say that a bill with such a clause introduced into Parliament by the merely secular educationists would meet with as cordial opposition from them as from ourselves. All that they stipulate for is this, that Parliament shall not meddle with the matter of religion at all, and that every

\* Dr. Guthrie sent his younger children for an hour or two daily to the parish school when at Lochlee, his summer quarters.



arrangement connected with that element in the schools shall be left to the judgment and discretion of the local boards; and this they do with the anxious desire that these schools shall furnish religious and secular education, and with the confident expectation, moreover, that, under this arrangement, the Word of God and saving truths of the gospel will, in point of quality, be as purely, and in point of quantity be as abundantly, provided for as before.

"For myself, I have that confidence in the religious feelings of my countrymen as to believe that in a board chosen by their votes, and therefore representing their sentiments, the religious interests of these schools will find as faithful guardians as they have ever enjoyed. My knowledge of many unendowed schools, and my experience of Ragged Schools, fully warrant me to believe that on this field Established Churchmen and Free Churchmen, Episcopalians and Voluntaries, may co-operate together in perfect harmony, and that here brethren may 'dwell together in unity.' In their denominational elements, the local boards will very much resemble the committee of our Ragged Schools; and, if not in all, in almost every instance, a motion to exclude religion from these schools will meet with the same cordial opposition and certain defeat as would assuredly be its fate at our board."

Previous to writing that letter, Dr. Guthrie had been in communication with the Duke of Argyll, to whom the country owes in no small measure the final settlement of this difficult question; and it was shortly after the appearance of Dr. Guthrie's letter in the newspapers that the following correspondence took place between His Grace and himself:—

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL to DR. GUTHRIE.

"ROSENEATH, January 21st, 1850.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have not yet had time to thank you for your letter respecting your educational views: and I am as glad that I have thus had an opportunity of seeing your more extended explanation in *The Witness*.

"Personally, and speaking only of what I should be most glad to agree to if we had a clean sheet of paper before us, I feel



no anxiety to exclude from the schools any one of the Presbyterian or Episcopalian bodies, provided only that religious education be secured, not as a separate, but as an integral part of the course of instruction; and if this is to be so, I do not see how, even on such a plan, starting anew as it were, some tests could be altogether avoided.

"But I wish to speak rather of existing circumstances as affecting practically our course, and these, I do confess, you and your friends seem to me to take but little notice of.

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"Your plan, as I understand it, is to place everything, election of schoolmaster, laws of religious teaching, hours thereof, &c., all at the disposal of a local board. But how are these local boards to be appointed? I agree with you that generally in Scotland the Bible would not be discarded by any board. But I am certain that anything approaching to a popular election would be a squabble of sectarian partisanship. The votes and intrigues would be divided by the law of Churchship. Your experience of the Ragged School Committee, to which you refer, is wholly delusive, in my opinion. That is a committee of educated and enlightened men met together with the common understanding that *Churchship* is not to enter into the consideration at all, either in electing masters or in regulating the mode of teaching. This does not apply to local contests, such as you would leave to be carried on between sects exasperated by petty feuds and bickerings.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Pray excuse this very hasty letter. I will not ask you to excuse what you may think the freedom with which I have stated my objections to the movement of your body, because, if correspondence is to be carried on at all, on matters of such great public importance, with the view of explaining the aspects in which they present themselves to persons in different relative situations, I hold that such correspondence should be free. . .

"My dear Sir,

"Yours most truly,

"ARGYLL."

Dr. GUTHRIE to THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

"EDINBURGH, February 1844, 1850.

"As to your Grace's remarks on the sentiments and speeches of some of our Free Churchmen (and some of these, I grant, leading Free Churchmen) I may say, I am 'not careful to



answer you in this matter.' Many things have been said by Free Churchmen with which it would be hard to saddle the Free Church.

"I may, however, remark two things in answer to your Grace's defence of the resolution of the Establishment to abate none of its ancient claims. *First*, that granting that Dr. Candlish, &c., would have done the same thing had they been in the Establishment, it does not prove more than that they would have acted imprudently and unwisely in these circumstances; but, *secondly*, the views even of Dr. Candlish and his friends (who are not the Free Church) do not afford ground for such assertion. I pray your Grace to observe that the Established Church insists that the candidate for a school shall not only sign his adherence to the doctrine of the *Catechism* and Confession of Faith, but that he shall sign the *Formula*, which binds him down to the membership, and subjects him to the discipline, of the Established Church. Now, though I do not agree with my friends in many of their movements in the matter of education, I think it is but justice to them to say that they do not insist on their teachers, even at present, being members of the Free Church, and that at this moment there are parties holding schools under the Free Church scheme, who do not belong to the denomination of Free Churchmen.

"Then I pray your Grace to observe that we are not inconsistent in making demands now, which we would have resisted as against the Dissenters before the Disruption. Since that time, the tables, by that very event, are completely turned. The body belonging to the Established Church was then the undoubted majority of the Scottish nation. The Established Church then contained within her pale two-thirds at least of the whole population, and she had rights of a *national* and *political* kind when she commanded a majority, which she must *de jure* lose when she passes into a minority. This argument may be pushed farther than the schools. I grant that the Act of Parliament establishing the present form of Church government goes on the footing that it is most agreeable to the *generality* of the people of Scotland, or some such terms,—so runs the Act which substitutes the present Established Church for Episcopacy. I have no desire to agitate these questions, so far as they touch the Church Establishment; only I think that when, for the sake of an exclusive and invidious power, the Established clergy stand in the way of a great national system of education, they themselves will force on the people of Scotland the consideration of matters which go deeper than the schools, and I must repeat my surprise that the sensible



men among them do not see that.\* I pray your Grace to observe that, but for this exclusive claim to which you surely cannot expect that two-thirds of the nation will agree (the great majority of the people agreeing to leave the education of their children in the hands of a minority),—well, I say, but for this exclusive claim insisted on by the Established party, the country might be blessed, before another session has run, with a secular and a religious system of education adequate to the wants and necessities of a country where, at this present moment, some two hundred thousand children are growing up in deepest ignorance.

"It was with no evil designs to the Established Church that I penned my letter; on the contrary, I hoped that it might catch the eye of some of their ministers and people. As to the latter, I have had expressions of their entire concurrence in my views from some, and, among others, one of the greatest ornaments among the laity of the Establishment. As to the clergy, I have seen an account of but one of them (Gillan of Glasgow) who sympathized with me. He proposed that to others besides the clergy of his own Church the management of their schools should be open. He wished other orthodox denominations recognised; and I am sorry to say his proposition called forth nothing but *hisses*.

"I had hoped that the Established Church and Free Church might have acted together in this great question, and no obstacle stood in the way of that but the claim to exclusive jurisdiction. I would have rejoiced in such a union. I would have preferred a system, which would have saved us what may happen under

\* "At this time they will yield nothing," Dr. Guthrie told a public meeting in 1854. "There was a sagacious man in this city, perhaps the most sagacious of her citizens—the late Sir James Gibson Craig—who, on one occasion, was dealing with a gentleman who insisted on having his last rights at law. Sir James advised him to yield a little; the reply was, 'No, not a stiver!' 'Well,' said Sir James, 'let me tell you that the man that will have the last word and the last right at law is very like the man who will have the last drop out of the tankard; the chance is he gets the lid down on his nose!' Now, if my friends of the Established Church would hear me,—and I know there are sensible men among them, but I am afraid they are overborne by those who are not sensible—let them pluck up courage and take up another wiser and, for their Church, a safer position. At the time of the Disruption down came the lid; at the time of the University Bill they would have the last drop—smack went the lid; now they will have the last drop again, and I say let them take care that the lid does not only hit the nose, but hit it off altogether!"



the new scheme—supposing it carried into effect,—a battle for the Bible, or Shorter Catechism in the schools (I ought to say at the ordinary school hours).

“However, I must say that I think there are far worse things than an occasional fight, and one of these was the old system which invested the power and management of the parochial schools in the hands of the Presbytery. I had seven years’ experience of that system, when I was in a country parish, and I strenuously supported the scheme for Government inspectors, before the Disruption, as some check to the useless, worthless mockery of former times.\*

“I believe that the sure way of having any scheme vigorously managed is to give those a *considerable* power at least in the management of it, who have a deep stake in the matter. The parents have the *deepest* stake in the schools; and we may rest assured that they will watch and work them better than parties who have but a remote interest in their success.”

The scheme which this letter defends became the basis of “The National Education Association of Scotland,” founded in April, 1850, in whose movements he took a leading part. But while its programme met with his cordial support, in one particular he thought it defective; for, far in advance of his time, Dr. Guthrie had already

\* In a speech he tells:—“I was seven years in the parish of Arbirlot; and while I believe I was just as attentive as my neighbours, I do not recollect of being three times in the parish school, though it was next door to me, except on those occasions, once a year, when the Presbytery Committee came to examine the school. The truth is, though I do not like to use a harsh expression—perhaps they are a great deal better since we left them—Presbyterial supervision was very much a decent sham. To be sure, if there were any old schoolmaster among the parish ministers, he pricked up his ears like an old hunter when he hears the sound of the horn; but as for the rest of us, who were not accustomed to it, to sit for weary hours hearing ‘A-b, ab—B-o, bo,’ was the *driest* business I ever had to do with. And well do I remember to have seen how often the watches were pulled out to see how the time went; and the truth is, if the ‘diet of examination’ had not been followed by another kind of ‘diet’ at the manse—a committee dinner, and a sociable crack with the brethren—there would have been very few at the diet of examination!”



become an advocate for a compulsory clause in any national measure which is to be effective:—

“It was at one of the first Ragged School meetings,” we find him saying, “that I first enunciated the necessity of a compulsory system. I remember I was sitting beside the late Bishop Terrot, and when I had finished, the Bishop said to me, ‘So you are in favour of a compulsory system of education?’ ‘Yes,’ I said, ‘I am thoroughly satisfied that no educational system will reach the very lowest classes—the dangerous classes—but a compulsory one. What think you?’ ‘Oh,’ said the Bishop, ‘I am quite of the same opinion.’ ‘Then why don’t you stand up and say it?’ ‘Stand up and say it!’ he replied. ‘Why, the people would think me mad!’”

As time went on, views more akin to his own, as regards the desirableness of a comprehensive scheme, began to spread not only among the laity but the ministers of the Free Church; and in a letter to his brother, Provost Guthrie, on 11th April, 1851, he writes:—“You would be glad to see that Dr. Candlish has taken a step in advance on the education question. This parts him, and it is well, from Gibson and Co. It is most lamentable to see how the best interests of the country and the Churches are sacrificed to extreme Establishment views on the one hand, and extreme voluntarism on the other. However, I hope for some national measure ere long, and if Melgund carry the second reading of his Bill, it will help on matters to a favourable issue. It will frighten the Establishment people, some of them, at least, into their senses.”

Lord Melgund’s Bill was in that same year thrown out; but at length Government took up the question—



a measure for a national scheme of education in Scotland having been, in 1854, introduced by the Lord Advocate (Moncreiff). During the successive stages of the National Education negotiations, Dr. Guthrie was in correspondence with various influential persons, both in the Cabinet and out of it. Not only his reputation as a social reformer, but his known breadth of view gave his opinions weight. The Lord Advocate\* — who, though he was not destined to carry through the final measure, did more than any other man to prepare the way for it,—writing to Dr. Guthrie from London in reference to the Bill he had introduced, thus expressed himself on 12th April, 1854:—"I must press upon you the importance—to you I may not say the duty—of giving decided utterance to your real opinions. You have only to make one of your manly, fearless addresses, and you will confirm more waverers in the House than all the Voluntaries can shake. . . . Depend upon it, names weigh far more than numbers up here, and you and Adam Black would, single-handed, make all the agitators kick the beam."

TO PROVOST GUTHRIE.

"April 17th, 1854.

"I fancy, like myself, you have been thoroughly disgusted and sickened with the violence of the Established Church on the one hand, and of the extreme section of the Voluntaries on the other, in the matter of the Education Bill. . . . I have let them know *up-stairs*, and here also *down-stairs*, that if the country cannot get education through a union with Non-Endowed Churches I will next address myself to the Establishment and promote a Bill which will give them all they ask in

\* Now the Right Hon. Lord Moncreiff.



the matter of the parish schools; and if, next, they are as unreasonable as the Voluntaries and won't come to terms, then I am prepared to say that Government must give us secular schools, leaving the Churches to look after the religious element. It is most melancholy that Christian men should act so as to threaten to drive us into such a position.

"We were getting on most favourably, preparing the way for a union (in the long run, and I would have hoped at no very distant period) between us and the United Presbyterians. This Education question has in Providence rather come in as an obstruction, men would say. I say, on the contrary, it proves most forcibly the need of union, and demonstrates the injury which the country and religion suffer from our divisions.

"Sir George Sinclair was the originator of our conferences, and in his house and at Dr. Brown's we have had a number of them. Adam Black and I spoke very plainly to Dr. Harper and Mr. Duncan of the violence of their Voluntary friends against Education. I told them distinctly that unless, in some way or other, they presented Voluntaryism in a less offensive light than as an obstruction in the way of saving our perishing masses, they would make it stink in the nostrils of patriots and enlightened Christians for a century to come, and put an end to all hope of union."

Meanwhile, waiting for a better day to dawn in Scotland, Dr. Guthrie was quite in his element when, on a visit to England shortly after this date, he was brought in contact with some earnest educationists of different Churches there:—

TO MRS. GUTHRIE.

"BIRMINGHAM, November 12th, 1856.

"I have not been idle since I came here. I was waylaid when within four miles of this place, and had to appear and speak at a meeting of work-lads belonging to the greatest glass-works in the world. The proprietors, the Messrs. Chance, who are excellent Christian men, have magnificent schools in which the meeting was held. The room, which has a fine Gothic roof, was decorated with festoons of flowers, banners, and inscriptions. There was a large assemblage of ladies and gentlemen, and a large number of the clergy of the town. We had music, singing, and speeches; and it was about twelve o'clock till we got home.



"Next day I was honoured by an invitation from the Clerical Society, which embraces almost all the Church of England ministers here. After attending their meeting, at which I made a short speech, I then visited an admirably managed institution established by the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Yorke\*—one of the finest of men, with whom I have struck up a friendship. There I had to address some two or three hundred children.

"That finished, there came a party of thirty gentlemen to dinner; after which, with Lord Calthorpe in the chair, we began the business which brought me here—to consider what is to be done for the educational interests of this town, so as to secure a larger measure of education for those children who are sent too early to work, as well for the large number of those who are neither at work nor school, but who are growing up to swell the ranks of the criminal population. Besides Lord Calthorpe, we had some dozen ministers, among others Angell James, some dozen merchants and manufacturers, and some lawyers—among them their stipendiary magistrate, a fine specimen of a lawyer. Mr. Winfield, our host, opened the business by an able and admirable address. . . . We came to a most harmonious conclusion, and I think laid the beginning of a great and good work."

While statesmen continued to bestir themselves, the complications caused by the misunderstandings and animosities of the various sections of churchmen in Scotland seemed to thicken. Two extreme parties existed: one of whom would have no bill which did not enact the use of the Bible and Shorter Catechism by express statute; the other would refuse any bill which made allusion to the teaching of religion at all. "Like sailors in a storm," to quote Dr. Guthrie's figure as he contemplated the situation, "who quarrel about mending some hole in a sail when the ship is on her beam ends, we have contended about minor matters, and even now are contending about theories of education, while

\* Now Dean of Worcester.



‘my people,’ says God, ‘are destroyed for lack of knowledge.’ Thousands starve while we settle the shape and stamp of the loaf.”

Between 1854 and 1872, six Education Bills were introduced into Parliament, of which only one—the Act of 1861, abolishing the tests whereby parochial schoolmasters were necessarily members of the Established Church—became law. In regard to all these measures, one point caused Dr. Guthrie a certain measure of perplexity; the precise way, namely, in which religious instruction would be best secured. What was known as the “use and wont” in Scotch parochial schools, implied daily instruction both in the Scriptures and Shorter Catechism. While Dr. Guthrie had perfect confidence, as we have seen, in leaving the matter in the hands of the people as represented by local boards, his feeling latterly was in favour of a clause enacting the reading of the Scriptures. He was opposed, however, to the proposal that a similar enactment should be sought for the Shorter Catechism; not because he did not set a very high value on that manual, but because he dreaded objections to the use in National Schools of a catechism which might be termed denominational. His experience in the Original Ragged School at Edinburgh, where no doctrinal Catechism is employed, led him thus to express himself in 1869:—“I would not propose the Shorter Catechism, nor the Wesleyan Catechism, nor the Church of England Catechism, but a Catechism that would embrace all that is special in



religion; all that it would be necessary to teach the children in our schools. I believe that if you had shut up the late Archbishop of Canterbury, the late Dr. Bunting, and the late John Angell James in one room together—if you had shut up these three heads of the Episcopalian, Wesleyan, and Independent bodies, and told them that out of that room they could not get until they prepared a Catechism for use in the schools of the country, they would have accomplished the task in five hours!”

In reference to this paragraph of his speech, Dr. Guthrie was both amused and gratified to receive the following note from Dean Stanley:—

“DEANERY, WESTMINSTER, December 27th, 1869.

“MY DEAR DR. GUTHRIE,—The next time you make a proposal about the Catechism, pray resolve to have the *Dean of Westminster* included in the party that is to be shut up for five hours. He thinks that he should much enjoy it, and that he could even hasten the process!

“Seriously, I cannot refrain from expressing my admiration of your speech, and from sending you a hearty Christmas greeting (if you will receive it) out of Established and Prelatical Westminster to Non-established and Presbyterian Free Church.

“What a blessing to us both that our dear friend at Inverary has been restored to us!

“Yours ever sincerely,

“A. P. STANLEY.”

Two years after that date matters in Scotland had ripened for a final solution of the question of a National scheme. Dr. Guthrie happened to be in London in the beginning of 1872—shortly before the Bill of the Lord Advocate (Young) was to be laid on the table of the



House of Commons—and when that measure, as well as the general question of national education, was being largely discussed in the circles in which he moved while in the metropolis:—

“39, PHILLIMORE GARDEN, KENSINGTON, *January 31st, 1872.*

“— was pretty severe on the Nonconformists, whom I so far defended. Indeed, I said distinctly that, in consequence of the position Cullen and the Roman Catholics of Ireland had taken up and the demands they are making, many in Scotland, myself among the number, were much inclined to give up all denominational teaching, such as the Shorter Catechism, in our schools in Scotland, as the only way of shutting the door against the Roman Catholic Catechism in the national schools of Ireland. I am glad now that before this storm rose, when I was at Lochlee, I had written the Duke of Argyll, in answer to his own questions, that I thought the best plan for Scotland would be, to give up the Shorter Catechism, leaving all denominational and sectarian teaching to parents and the Churches, through their ministers and otherwise, and have the Bible, and the Bible only, in our national schools. Indeed, I will remind the Duke to-day that I wrote him to that effect seven years ago, proposing that the national schools should in the main be modelled on our Ramsay Lane Ragged School, so far as religious teaching was concerned. I see by various letters as well as editorial articles in the *Daily Review*, that these views are spreading fast among Free Church people. I had a letter yesterday from Dale of Birmingham (John Angell James's successor), saying that the League men, of whom he is a chief, had heard that my views were in accordance with theirs, and asking me to give them expression in the *Times*, &c. But, as I shall write him, I am, meanwhile, for the old platform of the Nonconformists, which was to retain the Bible.

“The great blunder of the Ministry was to allow twelve months—reduced afterwards to six months—for Episcopalians and Roman Catholics to build additional denominational schools: they should, on the very contrary, have aimed at absorbing those already existing, and so in every way fostered the National System. This agreeing to grant subsidies out of the public funds to all the denominational schools which sectarian zeal sets up within a twelvemonth after the passing of the Educational Bill, which has led to doubling the amount of



money to such schools, and the handing over a vast amount of the education of England to Episcopalians and Roman Catholics, has, and has justly, inflamed the wrath of the Nonconformists. How the matter is to be remedied, if it admit of a remedy, is hard to say. Meanwhile it threatens to break up the Liberal party and unseat the Government."

Soon after the date of that letter, the measure for Scotland which has since become law, the Education Act of 1872, was introduced by the Lord Advocate. In its main provisions,—which secure that the control of education be given to the people, and that religious instruction, without being either prescribed or proscribed by the Act, be left to the decision of local boards—that Measure met with Dr. Guthrie's cordial approval, and he consented, at the request of various influential persons, to give public expression to that approval. This he did in the form of a "Letter to my Fellow-Countrymen," which was circulated broadcast over the land. One or two of its paragraphs may fitly close this chapter:—

"EDINBURGH, *April 9th*, 1872.

\* \* \* \* \*

"With a cry that this Bill will shut the Bible out of the school, persons have gone up and down the country alarming the people, and inducing them to petition against it. Going from door to door in some of our country parishes, they have startled them with the question, 'Do you wish the Bible put out of the school?' On receiving an emphatic 'No!' 'Then,' say they, 'sign this petition!' and down goes the name



—the pen of the honest man trembling with horror at such an audacious proposal.

“At present, there is no Act of Parliament requiring the Bible and Shorter Catechism to be used in any parish school, and all the change the Bill makes is to take the management of the parish schools out of the hands of the Established Church ministers and the heritors—most of whom being Episcopalians can be no friends to the Shorter Catechism—to place it, and the management of all new schools, in your own hands. And what have you done to make men dread intrusting you with that power? Can any man in his senses believe that the Bible-reading, Bible-loving people of Scotland will thrust the Word of God out of their schools? He pays you a poor compliment who thinks so. I have a much better opinion of you than the opponents of this Bill appear to have; placing more confidence in the judgment of the great mass of the people on all moral and religious questions than, with all due respect to them, in lords or lairds, the ministers of the Established Church, or of any other church whatever.

“I am not pleading for this Bill as if it were perfect. It may ‘thole mending,’ like the best things that come from the hands of men. There is time now and afterwards for that; and the advice at this juncture I would give you is that offered by a tenant of his father to the late Sir George Sinclair, at a dinner given to celebrate his election for the county. Up he rose, and, addressing the new-fledged member, said, ‘*Noo, Maister George, since ye are a Parlia-*



*ment man, I have ae advice to gie you; "Be aye tak, takin' what you can get; and ay seek, seekin' till ye get mair."*

"Take our shrewd countryman's advice. Lend your hearty support to a Bill which, conserving all that is good in our parish schools, will carry the blessing of education into every mining district, dark lane of the city, and lone Highland glen. Its compulsory clause will, with God's blessing, save thousands of unhappy children. They are now perishing for lack of knowledge; and I am certain that if many Christian, kind-hearted people knew as much as I do of the sad lives and sad ends, the misery, vice, and crime to which they have doomed these hapless creatures, should the Bill be thrown out, they would bitterly regret having petitioned against it. Not otherwise can the great mass of these poor, ragged, starved, emaciated children be saved from growing up in the deepest ignorance of a Saviour, of all that is good and holy; saved from what is worse than cold and hunger, worse than death itself—boys from the prison, and girls, who might be good wives and happy mothers, from eating the bread of infamy. In opening up a path to usefulness, happiness, virtue, and piety to thousands who are perishing before our eyes, this Bill has that which—were they there—would excuse many defects, and, like Charity, 'cover a multitude of sins.'"



## CHAPTER XII.

### DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL LIFE.

IN the Lawnmarket of Edinburgh—that picturesque street which descends from the Castle to St. Giles's Church—amid some spectacles which are sad enough, one sight both cheering and hopeful may almost any day be seen—a band of children, who trot along in pairs, on their way from the Original Ragged School to their breezy playground on the Links; and as the little regiment in fustian marches down the middle of the street, one may hear the bystanders, familiar with the sight, exclaim, “There go Dr. Guthrie's bairns, puir things!” There is truth in the description; for he regarded every child in that large family with an almost paternal interest. To children everywhere, indeed, his heart went forth, and they seemed to know it. The young “took to him” instinctively. When on a visit to any house, whether cottage or castle, where children were, he had not long arrived ere a youngster would be found mounted on his knee; and the remembrance of that visit would be cherished as vividly by the young as by the old. It may be imagined, therefore, what he was to



the group round his own fireside, and how full that fountain of affection and sympathy, which in its very overflow reached the friendless children of the lanes. If, as a public man, he owed much of his influence to a transparently genial nature and a large loving heart, how great the sway these gave him in the innermost circle of home! Of Dr. Guthrie consequently, more than of most men, it was true that to know and appreciate him thoroughly, one must have seen him at his own fireside, and amid the confidence of familiar intercourse.

"I am rich in nothing but children," he used to say. They were eleven in number; of whom the four eldest were born at Arbirlot, the others in Edinburgh; and of that large family he was spared to see ten grow up.\* He was never so happy as with his children about him. While they were still young, he made companions of them in his walks, striving to draw out the faculty of observation by explaining the aspects of the sky by day and at night, teaching them to name the trees when leafless, the wild flowers by the wayside, and to note the habits of the lower creatures. "Here I am," he would say, as with the companions of his rambles

\* Six sons—David Kelly, of the Free Church, Liberton, Edinburgh; James, agent of the Royal Bank, Brechin; Patrick, of Messrs. Dymock and Guthrie, Edinburgh; Thomas, farmer at Quilmes, near Buenos Ayres; Alexander, of Messrs. Balfour, Guthrie, and Co., San Francisco; and Charles John, student for the Scotch Bar.

Four daughters—Christina, married to Rev. William Welsh of Mess-fennan, minister of the Free Church, Broughton; Clementina Guthrie; Annie, married to Stephen Williamson, of Messrs. Balfour, Williamson, and Co., Liverpool; and Helen, married to David Gray, of Messrs. James Finlay and Co., Glasgow.



he entered a friend's house, "like Gad of old, with a troop!"

"On coming to Edinburgh, I resolved," he writes in his Autobiography, "to give my evenings to my family; to spend them, not in my study, as many ministers did, but in the parlour among my children." This resolution he carried into systematic practice, so far as his engagements made it possible. Had a visitor on one of those evenings dropped in on the group, he would have found Dr. Guthrie in his arm-chair by the fireside, a volume of Macaulay, or Froude, or "Sir Walter" in his hand, which he would cheerfully lay down every now and again, as one of the youngsters sought help with a hard sum, or another with a troublesome sentence in parsing. "I never tire," he wrote Miss S. Beever of Coniston, in 1870, "of reading the Bible, Shakespeare's Plays, Walter Scott's novels, and John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. I should also add, Burns's Poems. Shakespeare I have always considered the greatest uninspired genius that ever lived; and I remember how glad I was, when reading the biography of Dr. Chalmers, to find that he was of the same mind."

When his children were old enough to go out into the world, he continued to follow with lively interest the pursuits, and friendships, and recreations of each. "Well, whom did you meet last night at such a house?" "What exercises did they put you through at drill to-day?" "What do the girls in your school say of such a subject?" were questions with which he would greet his



sons and daughters when he met them, morning or evening. They were thus made to feel his sympathy, and his interest in all that individually interested them.

In after years, a chief part of the enjoyment he had in visiting the Continent consisted in having some of his family along with him. As to those left behind, he thus wrote to his son Alexander, a clerk in Liverpool at the time:—"June 30th, 1869.—I followed my old practice of keeping the good folks at home 'posted up,' to use one of your mercantile phrases, to all our movements: wishing, so far as can be done by long and descriptive letters, to impart the pleasures of our journeyings and sights; so that, to adapt a Bible phrase next, They that tarry at home may divide the spoil. These letters occupied all my spare time, and sometimes kept me in the house when the other members of the party were gadding about."

His theory and practice regarding parental authority and family discipline were very high: he believed—to use his own words—that "where parents will never punish their children, those children will punish *them*;" and, while his desire was to reign by love, not by terror, when he had occasion to manifest displeasure, it was done in a way not likely to be forgotten. Whenever he considered a matter of principle to be involved, no parent could be more inflexible; but such sympathy had he with the glee and buoyancy of youth, that in the matter of his children's recreations he was more indulgent than some devout parents, differently con-



stituted, might be able to approve. If his family had invited young people to spend an evening at his house, he made a point of being always present himself; and on such occasions no one more heartily enjoyed a charade where the characters were well sustained; or, what he delighted in still more, a reading from Shakespeare, Tennyson, or Dickens.

Though himself no musician, indeed wholly destitute of "ear," he expressed satisfaction that his family in this particular did not resemble him. "Mine are a sensible family," he would say, "for they take their height from me, and their music from their mother!" In the practice of music he encouraged his children, wishing them to cultivate a taste which would afford enjoyment without their going outside to seek it; his aim being, in every possible way, to make home attractive. Of instrumental music he had scarcely any appreciation, and used jocularly to say he was like the half-civilised prince who, visiting London and hearing the royal orchestra, said, in reply to the question what he thought of the music, "I do like de big drum!" One of the letters he wrote to Brechin in the earlier years of his Edinburgh ministry, affords a glimpse of his peculiar musical predilections, as well as of the *res angustæ domi* at that date:—

"18, BROWN SQUARE, February 5th, 1839.

"I am sorry to say that the annuity (half-yearly stipend) I drew on Monday is less than was anticipated. We were led to expect £260. I only got £211. I was intending to buy a respectable silver watch, as my present one goes about two



hours wrong in the day ; but this has been put off to next term, in the hope of better payments, for it will require no ordinary management to make the two ends of the string meet. We have, however, contrived to afford out of it a drum to Patrick and a fiddle to James, which at this moment are discoursing most sweet and harmonious music in my ear." (*To his sister Clementina.*)

Singing, however, Dr. Guthrie could enjoy, especially when the words pleased him, and were articulately pronounced. He scarcely ever attended a concert ;\* but we remember one such occasion, when the classical music which charmed others was manifestly for him an utter weariness. The mingled pathos and power of such a singer as Jenny Lind, on the other hand, affected and delighted him : he was unable, in 1861, to accept an invitation to meet her at Keith Hall,† and thus wrote to Lady Kintore—

"I should have liked very much to meet Jenny Lind, that I might personally thank her (though it were for nothing else) for the £50 she sang out of the pockets of the public for our Ragged Schools, last time she was here. I then heard her for the first time, and never heard—and unless I hear her again, never shall hear—anything like it. She sang 'Auld Robin Gray' ; and old men near me, with heads as bare as a peeled turnip, were greeting like bairns !"

\* To oratorios, as generally conducted, he objected on principle. Writing from Rome on 12th April, 1865, he mentions that some members of his party had gone to hear the *Miserere* sung in the Sistine Chapel by the Pope's choir, tells of his refusal to accompany them, and then adds :—"We hear men much condemned in those days for the freedom they take with God's inspired Word. Well, I think oratorios, whether in Popish Chapels, English Cathedrals, or Music Halls, involve what is to me a more offensive familiarity with God's inspired Word than much that sound people condemn. Think of a set of dissolute choristers chanting for the public entertainment the expressions of our Saviour's agony in the garden or on the cross !"

† The home of a family to whom he was much endeared.



Large as his household was, once only was his home darkened by the "shadow feared of man." We remember how much he was struck by a remark Dr. Chalmers made, when, shortly before that great man's death, he visited him at Church Hill:—"I have been a family man now, sir, for forty years, and we have never had a breach." Dr. Guthrie could have said almost the same. In a letter to Mrs. Guthrie he told her of the blow which an intimate friend in the Edinburgh Presbytery had sustained by the death of his wife, and added:—"I have written to him. May the Lord soften and sanctify and spiritualise him by this heavy and unspeakable calamity! Surely the losses of others, and of those so near to us, should call forth our warmest gratitude to our Heavenly Father that all our household have been spared as they have been. May the Lord comfort —— in his desolate home, and continue his great goodness to us, and thereby lead to repentance and love, and growing devotion to Him and his service."

When death did at length come into his own household, it was in the gentlest possible form. In 1855, the youngest child, an infant, was taken home at the age of twenty months.

*"EDINBURGH, August 6th, 1855.*

"Poor Johnnie (if one so near heaven can be so called) is to all appearance in 'the valley' now. This morning when I went to see him, between six and seven, I was struck with his death-like aspect. It was a sharp pang and heavy stroke, although one knew how safe his soul was, and that, to our beloved lamb, death would indeed be gain. Since morning, with a slight revival, the shadows of death have been settling down on his cradle; his sweet face is pale and pinched, the



mouth open, and a deep sleep lies upon him. With the exception of an occasional cough, he lies with his little emaciated hands peacefully laid on his breast. May this sharp trial be sanctified to us all; and if he be taken away, may our thoughts often turn, and our desires be more closely fixed, on that heaven, to which, first and youngest of our family, he leads the way." (*To his son James.*)

"EDINBURGH, August 9th, 1855.

"Our dear child is in glory. This morning they came to tell me that he was worse, and that I had better not come in, for there were slight convulsions. However, I went to the cradle; and, dear lamb, it was but some gentle gasping, the last feeble billows breaking on life's shore, before they subsided into everlasting rest. We have felt it deeply—not bitterly, no, certainly not; but it wrung my heart some minutes ago to lock the door of his lonely room." (*To the same.*)

"EDINBURGH, August, 1855.

"Sympathy at such a time as I have passed through falls like balm on an open wound. I felt much gratified by your very kind letter.

"Our dear child was very gently dealt with; and it was a great comfort to us that we had not to stand—what it tries me most to look upon—the sight of severe infant suffering. He withered very slowly away, and dropped off at length without a pang or struggle. It wrung one's heart to listen to his sinking breath, and see the last quiver of his little lip, and I cannot write of it without emotion; but we felt that his salvation was sure, that not the shadow of a cloud would lie on his early grave, so that we sing of mercy in the midst of judgment, and could not but feel that we are called upon to wonder at the longsuffering and goodness of God, in having so long exempted us from trials common to men. The 9th of August saw my eldest born, and my youngest die; twenty-four years rolling between the cradle of the one and the coffin of the other; and all that long period—during which affliction has passed over other families in successive bereavements—death had never darkened our door. Saved through Jesus, may we and ours meet in heaven; and, from the place of many graves, be united in the house of many mansions." (*To Lord Southesk.*)

That same year (1855) Dr. Guthrie's affections sus-



tained another trial in the death of his youngest sister, Clementina, a godly woman, who resembled him in appearance, and was not without a share of his genius. She died in Brechin somewhat unexpectedly, and her brother went north at once on receiving the sad tidings.

“BRECHIN, December 13th, 1855.

“After a very cold day, we arrived here about five o'clock, and went direct to the house of the dead. The first palpable feeling of the change was that *she* was not meeting us at the door. By-and-by we went in to see the sad, solemn remains in that room, so associated now with another world—my uncle, aunt, mother, and Clementina having all died there. It was very touching and overpowering to see its lone, cold, silent occupant in her coffin, so like, so very like herself. I never saw the dead so like the living.

“Well, her battle is over, and I have no doubt the crown is won—or rather, a crown won for her by Another is now worn by her. May we get grace and wisdom and strength to the end of our own fight of life! I left the room, feeling that it will be a happy day when we shall be all safely landed in a better world. . . .

“Her deep affections came out strong in death. They were telling me more fully about her extraordinary interest in our dear Johnnie. He, poor lamb, seemed to have wound himself round her very heart; and Jane repeatedly found her, after she had been up at your brother's seeing him, sitting on her return in a room by herself, with her hands on her face, weeping bitterly.” (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

For his surviving children, his one longing desire was that they might be saved—not, like his infant son, taken out of the world, but kept from the evil. They were early taught to realise that his chief anxiety regarding them was for their highest welfare. He had no special talent (at least he did not cultivate it) for preaching what are called “Children's Sermons;” indeed, we find among his manuscripts only one specially written



as such; but every Lord's day evening he went over the afternoon sermon with the younger children, breaking down into little words the truths he had taught to listening crowds in church; and at family worship on week-days, he heard the children and servants repeat some verses, or answers from the Shorter Catechism, which he then shortly explained. He did not speak much or often to his children on the subject of personal religion: it was chiefly from his letters that they learned the depth of his yearning for their conversion. If a member of the family happened to be absent from home for a longer or shorter period—still more, when one had left it to enter on the active duties of life elsewhere—whatever else he was writing about, he seldom lost the opportunity of affectionately pressing the question of personal religion.

“LEAMINGTON, 1847.

“I wish you, in our absence, to assemble the household daily for reading the Bible, praise, and prayer. As to prayer, I am quite sensible that a little difficulty is often felt in beginning. This is chiefly owing to the attempt to offer a long prayer. Let yours be at first but some four or five sentences: asking a blessing on the word read, praying for the pardon of sin, thanks for the day's mercies, and seeking the divine protection through the night. I wish you to keep a daily journal, giving an account of how your time is employed. . . . The ill-doing of children is the bitterest cup which a parent is called to drink. To see them growing up in the fear of God and care of their souls, in wisdom, especially heavenly wisdom, as in stature, is the greatest pleasure that your mother and I could enjoy.”

“EDINBURGH, 1864.

“My heart's desire for you and all the family is that you may be saved, reconciled to God, and that you may have Him



for your heavenly Father. Anything else is a comparatively small matter. I can look forward with comparative calmness to any struggles or difficulties my family may have to encounter in the world, when I have reason to hope that they have received that mercy and grace of God which our ever-blessed Lord died freely to bestow on us, and which was never asked, and asked in vain. See that you make your calling and election sure, praying earnestly that God would give you the earnest and witness of His own Spirit in godly desires, and gracious affections, and love to Christ, that you have been born again and are become a true child of God."

"EDINBURGH, 1858.

"I find it very difficult now to get anything into my mind; it has become so hard with age. That impressive season, therefore, through which you are now passing should be taken advantage of to store up that best knowledge which the Word of God furnishes. . . . Before I was fourteen years of age, I had read through all Robertson's Histories, David Hume's England, books of voyages and travels, I know not how many. There is too little solid reading nowadays among all; and books on trade, political economy, law, geography, and history would profitably fill up any spare time you have from business and exercise, and go far to strengthen your position by making all men feel, that in knowledge you were much above the common run of men.

"I have made it a point, since my earliest days at school, to do my best to keep in the front rank, whatever work I was engaged in; and, were I you, I would do my best, before many years were come and gone, to let people know that I was one of the best-informed men in the town, knowing my own business thoroughly and a little of almost every other body's. I have found that I raised myself much in the estimation of other men by showing them that I knew something of their business as well as my own. Farming and manufactures, for instance, you should read on, and pump everybody on them. There is nothing pleases men more than asking them questions about their business. It gives them an opportunity of appearing as instructors, and impresses them moreover with a very favourable opinion of you as one anxious to acquire knowledge, so that there is a double advantage here. You get useful information and make a favourable impression besides—and all knowledge is useful even to the making of a pin or shoe nail.



"Amenity of manners is one of the most important things that you can cultivate. I have been propounding it for years, as the result of a long and large observation on mankind, that a man's success in life, in almost every profession, depends more on his agreeable, pleasant, polite, kind, and complaisant manners than on anything else. I don't want you to profess anything that is not true; but you cannot be too studious of saying and doing things that will please others, and saying and doing nothing unnecessarily which will in the slightest degree hurt them or grate on their self-complacency; when you have to differ from them, do it with all possible reluctance and modesty, and when duty requires you to refuse any request, do it with the utmost politeness and tenderness."

"EDINBURGH, 1865.

"I was greatly gratified to hear from your mother, that you are thinking of going forward to the Lord's table, and openly giving yourself to our blessed Lord and Saviour. As I have often told you, and indeed all my children, my first and heart's desire is that they may all be saved. A saving change of heart; peace with God; to be restored to His loving favour; these form the 'one thing needful.' Earnestly seek these. Whoso by God's grace does so, will get them; and, if there be a sincere desire to be delivered from the love and power as well as punishment of sin, has indeed got them. Grace is a growing thing; and one is not to be cast down because he is very imperfect, but to go on seeking more and more nearness to the perfect man in Christ Jesus. God have you in His holy keeping, and make you an eminent Christian, a blessing and honour and comfort to us all.

"Let your daily prayer be 'Lord, lead us not into temptation!'—our safety lies in fleeing from it. Good people are not without their imperfections, it may be, sometimes their extravagances in ideas or conduct; still, overlooking these small faults, cultivate their society; it is safe walking with them, and such company and conduct is specially important at your age when your character for life is in the mould. . . . I saw an adage yesterday, in a medical magazine, which is well worth your remembering and acting on. It is this wise saying of the great Lord Bacon's:—'Who asks much learns much.' I remember the day when I did not like, by asking, to confess my ignorance. I have long given up that, and now seize on every opportunity of adding to my stock of knowledge. Now don't forget Lord Bacon's wise saying. . . .

"I commend you very affectionately to the Lord. John says,



'I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.' I am sure that your mother and I can say the same.

"With much affection, your loving father,  
"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

Amid all his care for his children, he was ever mindful of his duties to society. He claimed to be a Scriptural bishop;\* and, along with the higher requirements for the office which the Apostle enumerates he possessed the qualification of one "given to hospitality." From the time of his coming to Edinburgh in 1837 he literally kept open house. "In our large towns there are not a few ministers whose position in the Church and in society is such that they must keep an open door, and whose houses are very well described by one of my domestic servants who had once served in a small inn. 'Eh, mem,' she said to Mrs. Guthrie, after being a few weeks in my service, 'Eh, mem, this house is just like "a public," only there's nae siller comes in!'"

During the latter half, especially, of his ministry in Edinburgh, numberless strangers from the Colonies, the Continent, and America came to his house with letters of introduction, and, in showing them such kindness as he was always ready to offer, he not unfrequently found

\* Writing home from London in March, 1871, Dr. Guthrie tells that, when about to enter the special train provided for the guests at the marriage of Princess Louise, "the officials on the platform (noticing my gown, bands, and canonicals, I presume) '*my Lord*' me, as did also the Royal lacqueys at Windsor. They took me for a Bishop—nothing less! and I did not feel called on to repudiate; all the less, that I *am* a Bishop, in the proper, though not Episcopalian, sense of the term."



that he had "entertained angels unawares." He liked to reserve one morning each week for receiving young men to breakfast; indeed, for years before he died, there were few meals to which he and his family sat down quite alone. His own exuberant spirits and power of enjoying life seemed to communicate themselves to his guests; and a day spent in his company, especially when his conversational powers were drawn out by a kindred spirit, will be recalled by many in various lands as a "sunny memory." His striking presence, his charm of manner, his power of adapting himself, by a sort of instinct, to every grade of social life, were combined with a perennial stream of fervid talk and racy anecdote, which made him attractive to all, save, perchance, the formal and demure.

Mr. Ruskin, while residing in Edinburgh during the winter of 1853, was to be found each Sunday afternoon in St. John's Free Church. Dr. Guthrie, who made his acquaintance at that period, was much gratified one day to receive from that distinguished man the three volumes of his "Stones of Venice," and still more by the kind words he had written on the title-page. This explains the first sentence of the letter with which Mr. Ruskin accompanied the gift—

*"Saturday, 28th, 1853.*

"I found a little difficulty in writing the words on the first page, wondering whether you would think the 'affectionate' misused or insincere. But I made up my mind at last to write what I felt,—believing that you must be accustomed to people's getting very seriously and truly attached to you, almost at first sight, and therefore would believe me.



"You asked me, the other evening, some kind questions about my father. He was an Edinburgh boy, and in answer to some account by me of the pleasure I had had in hearing you, and in the privilege of knowing you, as also of your exertions in the cause of the Edinburgh poor, he desires to send you the enclosed,—to be applied by you in such manner as you may think fittest for the good of his native city. I have added slightly to my father's trust. I wish I could have done so more largely, but my profession of fault-finding with the world in general is not a lucrative one.

"Always respectfully and affectionately yours,  
"J. RUSKIN."

Describing Robert Burns's conversational gifts, Mr. Carlyle writes:—"They were the theme of all that ever heard him. All kinds of gifts, from the gracefullest allusions of courtesy to the highest fire of passionate speech, loud floods of mirth, soft wailings of affection, laconic emphasis, clear piercing insight, all were in him." To those who have been much in Dr. Guthrie's society, this description, emphatic as it is, will not seem inapplicable to the subject of this memoir. It is fair, at the same time, to mention that, while discussing any subject, he was very impatient of contradiction. Nay, he sometimes amused his friends by the pertinacity and the heat with which he would argue a point even after he was demonstrably mistaken.

From the time of his becoming a public man, and especially during the last twenty years of his life, his society was much sought after; and he often grudged the inroads unavoidably made on his time. After having traversed Scotland on his Manse Fund tour, and been brought thereby into contact with all kinds of people, he told the



General Assembly in 1846 :—" I shall never forget the many pleasant acquaintances that I have made, and the friendships that I have formed. I venture to say that there is no man within this house who has such a universal acquaintanceship as myself. In fact," he added, " when I walk the streets of this city, I get bows from so many that my head goes nod, nodding, like a Chinese mandarin's ! " At a later date, his writings and work as a social reformer widened the circle of his friendships across the border. Notoriety brought with it to him, as to others, its usual penalty—the difficulty of being anywhere free from intrusion. In out-of-the-way places on the Continent even, he was often amused, if not annoyed, by the attentions of total strangers, who had discovered him by means of his photographs.

The letters he wrote to his family, when absent on visits of duty or of recreation, were full of information and of interest—giving his impressions of all kinds of places and all sorts of people.

" *October 18th, 1850.*—We rolled in view of the fairy scene of Birnam and Dunkeld about five o'clock, and got a most kind and welcome reception from Mr. and Mrs. Maule. . . . — was with them. He uttered a sort of half-sneer at Lord Ashley, for which Mr. Maule gave him a very neat rap over the fingers.

" Yesterday evening we opened the school which Mr. Maule has built ; I preached, and then gave them an address on education. Laid my watch on the table, that I might keep within bounds, and found it lying with its yellow back uppermost,—the Secretary,\* who sat beside me, had turned it over that I might not see my length. . . .

" Yesterday there arrived a summons to the Cabinet Council which meets on Wednesday fortnight. I was amused with its

\* Mr. Maule was at the time Secretary of State for War.



plainness. It runs something like this: 'Sir, you are desired to attend a meeting of the Queen's Servants on such a day at such a place,'—and there is the whole concern. These peculiarities may arise from the circumstance that such an assembly as the Cabinet Council is in theory unknown to the British Constitution. Were that said document to fall into the hands of the royal butler or cook, they might think it intended for them! . . . I was a witness to-day to the signing away of nearly a million of money, the quarterly payment for the British army." (*To his brother Patrick.*)

Some of the brightest days in his seasons of relaxation were spent at Inveraray Castle; and to the close of life he cherished a peculiar regard for the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, by whose friendship he was long honoured. Writing from Inveraray, on occasion of his first visit, he says—

"October 11th, 1851.

"This castle is a grand house; and opening up from my bedroom, I have got, in one of the towers of it, one of the sweetest and snuggest studies man could desire. To-day I was strongly reminded of the old German stories which I have read of the days of alchemy, when the Duke took me up a cork-screw stair, along many narrow and intricate passages, to the top of the castle, and at length ushered me into a quiet round tower, which I found filled with retorts, furnaces, and the fumes of gases. He is a keen chemist; and I told him he only wanted a stuffed alligator, a vampire bat, a skeleton in the corner, and a horoscope on the floor, to complete the picture.

"Thursday looked so threatening that we did not venture to Loch Awe (or Lochow, the old way of it—as in the Campbell saying, 'It is a far cry to Lochow'). The day cleared up, however, and before luncheon Lady Emma and I set off on ponies for the summit of Dunquoich,—the steep and lovely hill, eight hundred feet high, whose face to the castle is a wall of foliage, with crags that peep out here and there.

"As to the way we live here: at half-past nine in the morning the family assemble in the saloon, from whence we march into the library. There, occupying three sides of it, we find the servants—some thirty of them, ranged up standing. The



bible, at the regular place of reading, is open for me. Prayers over, we re-enter the saloon, at the top of which (for, like the other public rooms, it is of vast size,) is our breakfast-table. In contempt of venison and grouse, I stick by the herrings of Loch Fyne. They are worthy of their fame.

"Luncheon over,—a drive. Then, at five o'clock, up to my room, after some fun with the wee *lordies* at the billiard-table: fine children they are, very pretty and very affectionate. In my study, I read and write letters; then at seven, bang goes the gong, which has no sooner finished its music than you hear, softened by distance (an essential element to my ear in their attractions), the bag-pipes, which play till the dinner-hour arrives.

"I am in great good health under this régime, so much so that I am half persuaded I was made for a nobleman!—at any rate, my mother's saying looks very true like, that I was never made for a poor man's son. Perhaps there were more philosophy in the matter, if I should attribute it to the ease and lack of care; but we were not made for a life of this kind, and so let us try to devote ourselves through God's grace to God's glory. Labour now, and look for rest in heaven."

In the autumn of 1853, the Duke of Argyll had invited Hugh Miller to Inveraray, and, knowing how shy he was, had hoped that the company of Dr. Guthrie, who was to visit there at the same time, would smooth his way. Dr. Guthrie had seconded His Grace's wish, and the following is the characteristic reply he received:—

"October, 1853.

"MY DEAR DR. GUTHRIE,— . . . And now for his Grace's invitation, to which I must this evening reply. I cannot possibly accept of it. It would be easy saying, 'I am not well,' which is at present quite true; and that I am still anxious about Mrs. Miller, which is equally true; but the grand truth in the matter is, that I cannot accept invitations from the great. I feel very grateful for his Grace's kindness. I have long entertained the true Presbyterian feeling for the name of Argyll, and I know that he who at present bears it is one of the first of Scotchmen. But there is a feeling—which, strong when I was young, is now, when I am old, greatly stronger still—that



I cannot overcome, and which has ever prevented me from coming in contact with men even far below his Grace's status.

"I could easily reason on the point, and have oftener than once done so:—I have said that our nobles have *their* place (and long may they maintain and adorn it), and that I have *mine*, with its own humble responsibilities, and duties; and, further, that men in my position, but vastly my superiors—poor Burns, for instance—have usually lost greatly more than they have gained by their approaches to the great. But I am not to reason the matter, seeing that it exists in my mind mainly as a feeling which I cannot overcome. You will think all this very foolish; but it is fixed, and I really can't help it.

"My dear Dr. Guthrie, yours affectionately,

"HUGH MILLER."

In May, 1854, starting from Glencarse, near Perth, the hospitable home of Mr. Greig, his friend for forty years, Dr. Guthrie, with one of his sons, accompanied Sir George Sinclair to visit the "far north" for the first time—for on his Manse Fund tour he did not reach Caithness). The expedition occupied a fortnight between Perth and Thurso, as Sir George travelled in the fashion of the olden time, with his own carriage and horses; and various northern country-houses—Culloden, Raigmore, and Teaninich—were visited on the way.

"AUCHINTOUL, May 23rd, 1854.

"... At last we reached Golspie, which is a small town about half a mile from Dunrobin. . . . The castle has all the magnificence of a palace. I was much interested by its many noble pictures. One I looked on with special pleasure—the portrait of the brave and good Earl of Sutherland, who was the first man to sign the Covenant in the Greyfriars' churchyard.

"On my return from the castle I saw two men at the gate, and recognising them by their blue cloaks and white neck-cloths to be of the order of 'The Men' (as they are called), or elders, I said to Sir George, 'That is a deputation for me to preach;' and so it was. They made a strong appeal, and I



agreed. The notice was borne abroad like the 'fiery cross' in days of old, and the church was crowded to the door.

"Thereafter, our worthy friend Sir George said to the inn-keeper that I would expound a little in the evening. I knew nothing of that, nor did he anticipate the result himself. After tea I went to the window, and there opposite to it are some dozen or two men and women, and the number growing. I said, 'What's that?' and found they had come to hear again. Went up-stairs for a few minutes to gather up the bones of an old sermon, and on coming down found the door and passages blocked up, and the windows beset; while the factor, with his wife and daughter, and others who had discovered some empty space inside, were making a breach at a window." (*To his daughters Clementina and Anne.*)

"THURSO CASTLE, THURSO, May 25th, 1854.

"This is a most singularly bare land. It is a pitiable sight to see trees twenty years in the ground little bigger than gooseberry bushes. The moment they show their heads over a protecting wall they suffer the fate of the defenders of a rampart the enemy are battering. Sir George has wisely made no attempt to fight with nature. . . .

"Our worthy host ministers to the bodies as well as the souls of the poor. One of the most touching sights I have seen was the excitement and joy and gratitude expressed by the people on his return. We slipped home some two hours before we were expected, but when we drove in sight of the town we saw a multitude of flags flying from mastheads in the harbour and poles and house-tops. Then, when the news of our arrival flew through the town, and we had crossed the bridge, it was most interesting as we drove along to see the people, men and women, old men and children, young men and maidens, rushing down the closes and streets to the water's edge and cheering Sir George, who uncovered and waved his hat to them in return from the window of the carriage. It was quite touching to see their testimonies of respect and affection. It reconciled me to the world, and showed how the upper classes, were they doing—as he does—their duty to the poor, instead of being scowled at and hated, might become objects of veneration and devoted regard." (*To Miss M. Stoddart.*)

While a guest of Sir G. Sinclair's, Dr. Guthrie went for a day's trout-fishing to a lonely Caithness



loch. After angling some time, the wind rose, and the old boatman dropped the anchor. Dr. Guthrie wished by-and-by to shift his ground; but behold! the anchor refused to be lifted;—the united strength of the party made not the slightest impression on it. What was to be done? Here were we, no living creature within hearing, no human habitation within sight—on a wild moorland loch a mile or two in length, shut in by low heathy hills, and nine miles from Thurso. Just then, it flashed on Dr. Guthrie's memory that he had read years before, in a 'Newgate Calendar,' of an ingenious method by which a criminal in England had contrived to cut through the stanchions of his cell-window, and effected his escape from durance vile. Procuring a large clasp knife from the boatman, he proceeded to smite its cutting edge with all his force against that of his own knife, thus notching both blades. He produced, in fact, two miniature saws; and applied first the one and then the other to a link of the iron chain by which the anchor was attached to the boat. Persevering in this process, the chain was at length cut through and sank to the bottom among the boulders, where the grapnel was imbedded.

We returned south by Sutherland and Ross-shire. The following was written by Dr. Guthrie to his late kind host on his homeward route:—

"*Calender, July 13th, 1854.*

"At a parish on our way to Tongue, it was the Sacrament Monday; Burn of Thurso was preaching in English to a large



congregation inside the Free church, Mackay of Tongue holding forth to an immense audience seated in and around his tent on the hill-side. We looked down from the road, as we drove along, on the Established Church manse. As we passed, the form of the beadle stepped from the church into the solitary and silent churchyard. I saw him raise his arm, and then up to us came three or four mournful-like utterances of the bell. I said to D., 'Now we'll see the congregation.' We looked east, west, north, south, up the hills, adown the valleys, along the glens,—no human being within sight. After the lapse of a minute or two the manse door opened, and forth came five people; they crossed the garden, passed through the churchyard, and entered: and this was the congregation. Relating this to a person at Tongue, I said 'But perhaps there was a Gaelic congregation already in the church?' 'No,' she replied, 'that could na be, for he had only two *natives*, sir, and they both died last year;' whereupon I could not help thinking of the melancholy feelings with which the minister had seen his last 'native'—*ultimus Romanorum*—laid in his grave.

"We enjoyed our trip to Sir Kenneth Mackenzie's much. Gairloch and Loch Maree are so surpassingly grand and beautiful that even Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine seemed tame and domestic. Glencoe, however, stood the test. I was afraid we should be disappointed even with it, and wonder at its littleness (as Gulliver, on his return from the company of the Brobdignags, was, with well-sized men of six feet odd.)

"Kindest regards to Lady Camilla and Miss Sinclair.

"With much affection, yours ever."

The claims made on him for a share of his summer holidays, by friends across the border and in Ireland as well as nearer home, were often more numerous than he could meet; but there are many readers of these lines to whom they will recall his cheerful presence in their circle. The extracts which follow refer to two *réunions* of a kind which he greatly enjoyed—Evangelical Alliances of a social character,—where, under the roof of some representative layman, he held free intercourse with brethren of other denominations. The meeting first described



took place at the beautiful residence of Mr. John Crossley of Halifax, on the banks of Lake Windermere. After leaving Bolfield he wrote—

“SOUTHPORT, *August 25th*, 1865.

“Notwithstanding its days of rain, the week your mother and I spent at Mr. Crossley’s was a singularly bright one. From eight in the morning till ten at night, ours was anything but a Quakers’ meeting. It was, rather, a firing like that before Sebastopol,—only it ceased at night. Binney of London came much broken down, but brightened up wonderfully. We had Kelly of Liverpool, and Lindsay Alexander of Edinburgh, and last, not least, Dr. Robert Vaughan. Vaughan is seventy. He preached on Sabbath afternoon a very artistic sermon. He has a graceful, effective manner and wonderful energy for his age.

“The Crossleys are delightful people. It was with them the Prince of Wales stayed when he visited Halifax. They were quite delighted with his frank and unassuming bearing, and while he was with them, Mr. Crossley had prayers and all things else just as usual.”

“In October, 1871,” writes the Rev. Newman Hall, “I had the great pleasure of spending a week in Dr. Guthrie’s company at the house of Sir Titus Salt, the great manufacturer of alpaca. The occasion was the opening of a Congregational church. Dr. Guthrie, Mr. Binney, and myself were among the preachers.

“I never heard Dr. Guthrie’s equal for vivacity and variety in conversation. Sometimes he convulsed us with laughter by his witty anecdotes. Sometimes every eye was moistened, in sympathy with his own, at some tale of sorrow or of love. Sometimes he would charm us by his descriptions of scenery and of fishing, his chief pastime; and, throughout all, there was interwoven the golden thread of Christian love and hope. Going through the mills of Sir Titus, he asked questions so minute respecting every detail, and implying such accurate knowledge both of the material employed and the mode of working it, that both master and men marvelled that a parson could know so much of weaving. Missing him, I went into the church, and found him in a pew, with a little boy between his knees. He was questioning the youngster about all sorts of things. The boy was so charmed with his big interrogator that he answered with readiness, and even questioned the questioner, who was radiant with happy interest in the lad.



"I remember a good anecdote he told of some Edinburgh preacher, who, knowing that Dr. Chalmers was to be one of his hearers on the next Sabbath, took special pains in composing his discourse and committing it to memory. Alas! owing to the excitement produced by the presence of the great man, the preacher stopped short in the middle of his discourse, and was some little time before he could pick up the lost thread. Dr. Chalmers came into the vestry to thank him for his sermon, adding, 'Cultivate the pause, sir. Cultivate the pause!' The preacher felt additional chagrin at what he thought irony. Some time thereafter, he met the Doctor on the street, who said, 'Sir, I have been thinking much of the great effect produced by your pause the other day. Cultivate the pause, sir! cultivate the pause!' Dr. Chalmers had supposed it to have been premeditated."

Dr. Guthrie himself alludes to this visit:—

"MOSSFENNAN, October 24th, 1871.

"On Tuesday Mrs. Guthrie and I set off for Crow Nest, near Halifax, the home of Sir Titus Salt. There we found Binney of London, Newman Hall, Balgarnie of Scarborough, &c. Sir Titus has literally built a town of many streets—the houses being occupied by those who labour at his vast mills and works; out of the one grand gate of which we saw, pouring along by an open passage, four thousand workers come, at twelve o'clock, their dinner-hour. I could liken it to nothing I had ever seen, but the rushing out of bees from the door of a hive when a swarm is coming off! In this town he has built a splendid church, also lecture-room, public hall, forty almshouses—filled with his pensioners, who get ten shillings a week. No wonder the Queen has made him a baronet. She might have made him a 'jarl' for that matter, or even a duke. . . .

"I should have gone to Hawarden Castle to spend a few days with the Premier, on the Tuesday, but deferred my visit till the following week, so it fell through, as he had to be in London." (*To Mrs. Wyld, Spitzbrook, Kent.*)

"Mr. Guthrie in London would be a mine of wealth to our friends in the north for the next two or three years, and would be the cheapest and most effective



deputation they could send to England." So wrote the late loveable Dr. James Hamilton, of Regent Square, early in 1843, with reference to a strenuous effort made, shortly after the Disruption, to transfer Dr. Guthrie's ministry to the British metropolis. Many a time thereafter, he was pressed to consider the question whether, after all, he ought not to make London his permanent abode, and occupy a sphere of influence which would have been so much ampler there than anywhere else. He never yielded. But his visits to London on public duty were frequent; in later life, indeed, when his circle of friends in the metropolis had become very large, he spent a portion of each season there. The familiar letters he wrote home from thence tell of an uninterrupted round of engagements, both for public work and social converse.

"22, BURY STREET, LONDON, 23rd February, 1853.

"Last night dined at Mr. Tufnell's.\* Met Lady Harriet Dunlop, the Lord Advocate, Lord Robert Grosvenor, Lord Monteagle, Hon. C. Howard, Monckton Milnes and his lady. Lord Monteagle (formerly Mr. Spring Rice) brisk and very talkative; he and I did not agree about what should be done in the English Church. He is frightened at the idea of a Convocation. Then we had the question of the opening of the Crystal Palace on the Sabbath. Tufnell thinks it might be opened after two o'clock. Monckton Milnes and I had it pretty fully discussed, he on one side and I on the other; Tufnell and C. Howard auditors. I flatter myself I had the best of it. Milnes argued like a gentleman, was very candid, and owned that Scotland owed a great deal to the way in which her Sabbaths were kept, although he thought it too severe. Then we discussed Ragged affairs, and left at length about eleven o'clock.

\* The Right Hon. Henry Tufnell, M.P.



"I went down with Howard and Moncreiff to the House. Got, through Lord C. Russell, into the Speaker's gallery. Spooner's motion against Maynooth on. Heard ——— in the strongest brogue speak a strong Romish speech; coarse, vulgar fellow, very like one of the Cowgate brokers in his holiday clothes."

Our readers may remember how, in his Autobiography, he describes his first visit, when a young unknown stranger, in 1827, to the House of Commons, and the zest with which he then listened for the first time to a Parliamentary debate. In many of his letters from London in after years, he tells of visits to Westminster, but in circumstances very different.

"February 28th, 1855.

"Went to the Commons about six with Mr. Arthur Kinnaird. Got into the Speaker's gallery, and was set down shoulder to shoulder beside the Roman Catholic Archbishop McHale, or John of Tuam. Bright speedily came up, and I had a crack with him, when I had an opportunity of complimenting him on his last Friday's oration.

"Then up came Monckton Milnes; then Arthur Kinnaird arrived with a message from Sir James Graham, to see whether and where I was to preach on Sunday; then Serjeant Shee, through Mr. Smith, introduces himself to me, and, by way of a good joke, proposes to introduce me to John of Tuam. Smith held forth against the Pope, and the 'brass band,' nearly as loud as you sometimes—till I feared John would turn round on us. I enjoyed the House of Commons for a while; and then off to Sir J. Carnegie's to dinner at seven."  
(*To Provost Guthrie.*)

"LONDON, 23, BELGRAVE SQUARE, February 11th, 1856.

"On Thursday night I went with Lord Panmure to the House of Lords, and never saw a more surprising phenomenon than Lyndhurst. He is above eighty years old; yet, save when once or twice he was seized with the feeble cough of an old man, he has not an appearance of such age about him. He wears a well-formed brown wig, and the heat of the House



gave him a complexion. He spoke for more than an hour with great lucidity—his periods admirably constructed—calm yet pithy in manner.

"Lord St. Leonard's answered Lord Granville (who answered Lyndhurst, and answered him well). St. Leonard's is a hard, dry lawyer. I got clean tired of him; and, after a weary and *drieck* hearing of one and a half hours, I came away about nine o'clock. For the last half-hour I lay on the steps of the throne, and studied the ornate ceiling, in which (tell it not to the Society for Scottish Rights!) there are sixty-four compartments,—all filled with the rose, save four, in two of which the shamrock appears and in two the thistle. However, I must say that throughout the House there are great store of rampant lions and monstrous unicorns."

In a letter of 17th February, 1856, he records a visit to Chelsea and its sage, to whom he carried an introduction from their mutual friend, Professor John Stuart Blackie. After telling of his interview with Mrs. Carlyle, he continues :—

"I did not wish to disturb Mr. Carlyle, but he came, and an uncommon-looking man he is; an eagle-like look in his great glaring eyes, hair half grey, and a strong Dumfries-shire tongue. He was in a *robe de chambre*, most kind and courteous. I got him upon the neglect of the uneducated and lapsed classes: he and I were quite at one. He uttered a number of great thoughts in magnificent language; lightened and thundered away in sublime style—at the heads of governors, ladies and gentlemen, and this selfish world; and looked to me very much—as he swung his arm, clenched his fist, and glared round him with his black beard and shining eyes and grizzly hair—like an incarnation of Thor, or Woden, or some other Scandinavian divinity." (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

"LONDON, 28, WESTBOURNE TERRACE, April 18th, 1869.

"Your mother, Mr. and Mrs. Fuller-Maitland, and I, have just returned from Westminster Abbey. It was arranged we should go there this forenoon, and the Dean graciously offered to go over the Abbey with us. We reached the Deanery at eleven o'clock, and were received with much courtesy. The Dean's



wife is a sister of the late Lord Elgin, and a special favourite of the Queen,—I don't wonder that the Queen likes her. The Dean is not a man of what you would call *presence*; nevertheless, with his great talents, extraordinary accomplishments and delightful manners, he is a most charming man; very *broad*, however,—I mean ecclesiastically. He and I had some joking about our different nationalities and churches. We passed nearly three hours on our feet, going from monument to monument. The Dean's amazing stores of knowledge and the pleasant way in which he told the story belonging to each monument, so full of kindly feeling, ready wit, and 'wise saws,' made these three hours among the most delightful I ever spent in any man's company. It was a great treat.

"I know not over the dust of how many kings we stood, from Edward the Confessor, who built the first Abbey, and Henry III. who built the present one, down to George II. with his Queen, the last Royalties who lie there. He was a *mauvais sujet*, George II., a man that had no virtue, nor made the smallest pretensions to any,—with hardly one redeeming quality but courage. And yet, after Caroline, his ill-used wife—the Queen who figures in the 'Heart of Midlothian'—died, he expressed a regard and affection for her of which he gave little evidence in her lifetime, and expressed it in a very curious way. At his death he desired he might be laid beside her, that their dust might mingle. For that purpose, he laid her coffin in a stone sarcophagus, sufficiently large to contain his own also; giving directions, when his coffin was laid beside hers, that the side of the Queen's and of his own should be taken out. The Dean saw their bones mingled together in the same sarcophagus.

"To me, as a Presbyterian, the place most interesting was the Jerusalem Chamber, as it is called. I used to think that it was in St. Margaret's Church, which is close by, that the great Westminster Assembly sat, which drew up our Confession of Faith and Catechisms. I learned from the Dean that it was in this chamber they met, and he showed me the very place where Baillie, Gillespie, and the other Scotch Commissioners sat. This Jerusalem Chamber is a venerable room, bearing all the marks of a remote antiquity. It contains the oldest picture of any English king; and, in the Westminster Assembly, held a convention of the best, greatest, and wisest men that perhaps ever met on this earth. I felt there as if I stood at the well-head of our national religion, and of those moral and religious influences that have made Scotland and Scotchmen what they are. Curiously enough, there also met Tillotson and



others, when the attempt was made under William III. by certain alterations in the service book to meet the scruples of the Nonconformists, and reconcile them to the Church of England. It failed; but as most of the alterations then proposed were adopted by the Episcopal Church in America, that grand old room may be regarded as the birth-place of the present Presbyterian Church of Scotland on the one hand, and of the Episcopal Church of the United States on the other. Nowadays—and what a fall is there!—the Lower House of Convocation meets in that chamber, a *jeckless* convention, the ghost and shadow of a Church.

“I was *canny* Scot enough, I may add, to read myself pretty well-up beforehand in the Dean’s history of the Abbey, and thereby, neither appearing nor being an *ignoramus* either in the civil or ecclesiastical history of the country, I saved my character, and added very much to the profit and pleasure of my visit.

“Yesterday forenoon we went to Mr. Spurgeon’s Tabernacle. There was, as usual, a great crowd—some six or seven thousand people—and we had a grand sermon. We went into the vestry after the service, and had a crack with this greatest of English preachers. Had he more of the emotional, great as he is, he would be still greater. He was very genial and kindly.

“If I am spared to visit London again, I shall get into some quiet, plain, *buyless*, *flealess* lodgings in the City, and so have time to see a number of its most interesting institutions. I intended to do so at this visit, but have never been able to get down into the stratum where they lie.

“The Lord bless you all, and all the dear children and grandchildren, near and far away. We were made glad and thankful to God for all the good news of your letters.” (*To his son James.*)

“39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, KENSINGTON, March 22nd, 1870.

“To afternoon-tea here, came Disraeli and his wife Lady Beaconsfield, Archdeacon Sinclair, and Lord Lawrence. Disraeli was very courteous to me, saying that he had often heard of me from old Ellice. He is a remarkable-looking man; extraordinary eyes, large, black, and glistening. I had a deal of talk with him—about oratory chiefly. This came on in consequence of my saying I had never had an opportunity of hearing him speak, and, being anxious to do so, I asked whether there was any hope of hearing him in the House any of these nights.

“Did your mother tell you about meeting the Queen of



Holland, at Sir William Hall's, on Saturday?" (*To his daughter Clementina.*)

"39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, KENSINGTON, *March 25th*, 1870.

"The leader of the devout party of this new half-Christian sect, which has sprung up in Calcutta—a most eloquent and extraordinary man—has reached London, and Lord Lawrence was anxious I should meet with him. Lady Lawrence told me afterwards that he had read my books, and looked forward with pleasure to meeting me. Very extraordinary! which reconciles me all the more to the providence which closed the pulpit and opened up the press for me." (*To his son David.*)

"*5th April*, 1870.

"Your mother and I, with the Maitlands, dined at Lord Lawrence's on the 31st, at eight o'clock. The house is adorned with articles of *virtu* and spoils from the East. Lord Lawrence received us with star and ribband. In the company I found some old acquaintances—among others, Sir C. and Lady Trevelyan. I had some interesting talk with the latter; I saw her with her brother, Lord Macaulay, in Free St. John's, some three months before he died, and he looked very ill then. We had much conversation about him.

"The appearance of Keshub Chunder, on entering the room, was very striking; his dress was a blue robe which flowed down to his heels, and was bound by a cincture. His person is tall, erect, and graceful, his countenance noble, extraordinary large black eyes, and features perfect, very like those of the Parsees I once saw in my church. On seeing him, I ceased to wonder at what Lord Lawrence told me of his wonderful eloquence. He has heard him give a public lecture expounding his views; on which occasion he began by prayer, and prayed after such a manner that one could hardly know him not to be fully a Christian. He has *broken his thread*, thus publicly breaking with Hinduism—a step Rammohun Roy had never the courage to venture on; still, the old habits of his old religion cling to him thus far, that he eats no animal food, and drinks no wine (which is a very good thing). Lady Lawrence had some curried vegetables prepared for him; and he was not asked to give his arm to a lady when we left the drawing-room for the dining-room. I had some talk with him, both before and after dinner.

"Sir C. Trevelyan and I had a good deal of conversation about the management of the poor, and how the evil of a



growing pauperism is to be met. I preach everywhere that nothing will arrest, far less cure, the evil, but locking the door of every drinking-shop in the land.

"Spurgeon we heard last Sunday, his church an imposing scene. I have been advising them, if possible, to get Keshub Chunder Sen there—as the most impressive spectacle of sound religion he could see." (*To his daughter Mrs. Williamson.*)

Many of the happiest days of his domestic and social life were spent in a locality which presents a contrast the most complete to the din and hurrying crowds of London ; and any record of Dr. Guthrie would be incomplete which did not say something of his Highland retreat at Lochlee.

Enfeebled health from 1849 onwards necessitated his seeking, each year, after the work of the winter and spring, a place of entire seclusion for a month or two. He found it in the northern part of his native Forfarshire, where, in a remote recess of the Grampians, he was distant four-and-twenty miles from the nearest railway station. Returning there almost every season for twenty-three years, this place became, to his intimate friends, associated almost as much as Edinburgh itself with Dr. Guthrie. For "the Glen," as he invariably called it, he himself formed a singular liking. He believed that the entire rest he obtained there each returning year was one great means in providence of prolonging his life ; and it is impossible to describe his delight when he got away from the city in early summer to the silent upland moors and fragrant birch-woods through which the North Esk runs amber-coloured



to the sea. Dr. Guthrie's lonely dwelling\* stood on the banks of a small but very picturesque mountain-lake. All the surroundings are such as to suggest Scott's description of a similar scene:—

"Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,  
So stillly is the solitude."

"KIRKTON OF LOCHLEE, June 26th, 1849.

"I wish you were here to enjoy with me this quiet nook of a busy, bustling world. I used to ride on horseback in the mornings before I left town, and usually returned home up the Canongate. Here I often ride some hour or two before breakfast, and if I could make a satisfactory picture I would hang these two scenes up side by side before the world. Such a contrast!—God made the one, man and Satan the other. I can roam here by loch and streamlet, with my eyes now up on the blue heavens, now on the majestic hoary crags, now on the calm blue waters, now on the leaping, rejoicing falls, and see neither sight nor hear sound of sin,—of the groans wherewith the whole creation groaneth. If Jesus Christ did not say—pointing to yon outer world where the battle is a-fighting—'Arise, let us go hence;' if duty to Him and our fellow-men did not come in and say with Martha to her sister, 'the Master is come, and calleth for thee,' I would be content to spend the remainder of my days in this sweet quiet solitude.

"There were many things in your letter which interested me, though I failed in answer to take them up. You would wonder how many letters I have to write, even here. True, the post comes but seldom; but then, when the tide flows in, a whole fleet sails into harbour; and being anxious to embrace every opportunity of gathering a stock of health, I spend as little time as possible under other roof than that of the clouds and skies." (*To Miss Georgina Hay.*)

The limited accommodation which his abode there afforded was often severely taxed. "We have visitors

\* This house, the late Lord Dalhousie—to whom the entire parish belonged—permitted him to occupy rent-free;—one of many tokens of a sincere friendship.



enough," he wrote, "to keep us from feeling our solitary house in the deer-forest dull. It is a sort of family resort, one branch coming after another, and filling our walls with the cheerful voices and feet of bairns." Besides his family, Dr. Guthrie generally had one or two of his most intimate friends as guests. "I hope," he wrote in 1858 to Miss Esther Burns (in anticipation of her visit), "that you will not quarrel with roughing it in this Highland district, where you have so little chance to be run away with that we all go to bed, in the heat of summer, with every door of the house standing wide open! Here we don't patronise my friend Chubb, of London, under whose locks and keys I often lived when there. . . . You shall be '*veel entered*,' as Dandie Dinmont said of Brown's terrier, into rowing, and fishing, and eating porridge (capitally boiled), and loch trout."

Sometimes the arrivals at Lochlee were wholly unexpected—belated pedestrians, who cast themselves on our hospitality for the night, or those whom no distance or difficulties could daunt, like the Irish minister who wrote to Dr. Guthrie in 1853 asking a sermon, and added, "Should you refuse this request, the danger is that I may besiege you in person. To escape this casualty, especially from an Irishman, best say you'll be with me." It is amusing, after reading this, to find in a note from Lochlee the following — (though the minister in this case was not the writer of the intimidating letter):—



"INCHGRUNDLE, LOCHLEE, *May 29th, 1858.*

"Last evening a gig was seen coming along the loch side, and by the field-glass I saw there was a white neckcloth in it. It held Mr. —, all the way from county Armagh, to ask me to open his church. Extraordinary characters the Irish! I promised him my first and best services when I next went to Ireland."

The reference in the lines which follow is to an eccentric gentleman, then resident in the Glen, now dead:—

"Yesterday, to my horror, K——,—who should have come up to dinner at four o'clock—arrived at half-past eight in the morning! He got on my dreadnought, drew out a red nightcap, and covered the table with letters and law papers \* to read to me. I have seldom endured anything worse, not even toothache. It rained heavily outside, but worse within. I determined—though outside should be bucketfuls—I would be off to the loch after dinner, and get him away."

Though Dr. Guthrie's power of walking, from the condition of his heart after 1847, had been seriously impaired, and climbing a hill on foot would have been an entire impossibility, he accomplished many mountain expeditions on his hill pony.

"INCHGRUNDLE, *July 18th, 1860.*

"D—— and I took the opportunity of Saturday forenoon, being quiet, to ascend the summit of Mount Keen.† I rode 'Bess' up—with some little exercise of care—to the very top, or rather to the base of the natural cairn which crowns the mountain.

"The day was clear, and the view passing anything I had ever seen, really grand and superb. All around us, to the extent of forty or fifty miles, was a vast tumbling sea of

\* Mr. K—— believed himself persecuted by a party or parties unknown.

† The highest summit in the parish of Lochlee, a few miles from Dr. Guthrie's residence, 3,180 feet above the sea-level.



mountains. Ben Macdhui, one mass of glistening white, and the black rocky knobs of Benavon rose above the upper winter there. We were surprised to get a glimpse of royalty from the bare top of Mount Keen. Using the glass, I could see the tower and buildings of Balmoral visible and distinct. So Her Majesty, from the windows and front of her door, has a daily prospect of the summit of Mount Keen.

"We found the *Azalea procumbens*\* in full bloom: abundance of it close to the very cairn, wonderful to see in rich, rosy beauty, where nothing almost lives but lichens and mosses: and, best of all, as we reached the foot of the cairn—sailing by within three hundred feet of us—came a great eagle. I had seen that grand bird in the sky before—once in Sutherland, and once in Switzerland—but at a long distance. Here we were so near as to give us a vivid idea of mounting up as on eagle's wings. What power and majesty in its flight!"

Occasionally Dr. Guthrie and his friends went up "The Ladder" road, described by Her Majesty in "Our Life in the Highlands," across the hills which separate Glenesk from the valley of the Dee, and, after remaining a day or two in Ballater, the party returned.

"INCHGRUNDLA, July 18th, 1857.

"We got back about five o'clock last night from our expedition over the hills into Aberdeenshire, most unlike clericals and town-bred ladies. Clementina, like a stout Highland lass; — very like a deer-herd or gillie; Mrs. Guthrie mounted on *one* honest nag (as were the rest of us), and having a great bundle slung on each side of her saddle, the *beau idéal* of a country wife on her way to the market with her dairy produce.

"As to myself, I was very 'orra like,' I was told, and do believe. My steed was a colt, still unshod; I sat on a saddle used to bring home the red deer. It is a vast machine, broad as a table, and furnished with a great array of straps and

\* Dr. Guthrie had a considerable acquaintance with the Alpine flora of the Grampians. He would often come in from his walks at Lochlee with a miniature nosegay, tastefully arranged, containing Saxifrage, Trientalis, Pinguicula, Polygala, Rockrose, Oak-fern, or others of his favourites, maintaining that no Covent Garden bouquet was half so beautiful.



things—appurtenances and appendages which proved very useful in slinging on coats, cloaks, a great whang of cheese, and some dozen or two of *speldings*, or dried haddocks, which my careful housewife purchased at Ballater. My hat, which has lost all the genteel look it had when purchased at Geneva, was wreathed with flowers, and 'tods tails' or stag moss—that being the most convenient way of carrying our floral spoils.

"We had a *picnic* on the summit of Mount Keen, under the rocks of the natural cairn, on the lee side—for the wind blew strong and keen up there, although all was quiet below—reading us a lesson of the disadvantage of a lofty lot in life. The rain caught us within two miles of Ballater, and a pretty appearance we had as we entered it! The women's straw bonnets, once braw, covered with plaids: a deer-hound had ate up my respectable black hat, and I was obliged to enter the 'town' with my *tackled* Genevan; and to my discomfort I found that there was not a hat in the shops of Ballater or Braemar that would squeeze down on my *caput*.\*

"We had a delightful and glorious expedition, and we returned last night to bless God that we had suffered no accident, nor even any serious alarm. The only thing like it was when Clementina was coming down the 'ladder' of Mount Keen (a 'Tête noire'-looking place) her nag chose to stand and back at an ugly corner, where a slip of the foot would have sent it down some 150 or 200 feet into the brawling mountain-burn below." (*To Rev. W. Welsh.*)

#### "KIRKTON OF LOCHLEA.

"Some days ago I had a night of great discomfort from the fate of a fine doggie here—a very beautiful Skye terrier.

"One morning Duncan Michie went away to kill foxes, and I saw him coming home at night very *dowie* like. His terrier had gone down after a fox into a hill cairn, till he was buried among great stones that, as Duncan said, all the parish could not lift; and deep from the bowels of the hill they heard his whine and bark. I was miserable to think of the brave, faithful beastie dying there of hunger and thirst; so I encouraged Duncan by all means to raise the shepherds and dig away next day. And was not I a happy man when Sandy (the shepherd, who lives

\* When in Brittany, in 1864, wishing to purchase a broad-brimmed beaver, such as the Breton peasants wear, Dr. Guthrie went into the chief hat shop in Quimper for the purpose. The whole stock was tried in vain; a hat had to be made to order; and it was amusing to see the astonished look of the little *chapelier* as he measured Dr. G.'s head, and shrugging his shoulders exclaimed, "*Mon Dieu! quel tête! quel tête!*"



beside us) came home from the hill with the good news of the terrier's safe deliverance? But, surely, it must be a match for any of Dandie Dinmont's breed; for, after it was drawn out of its rocky tomb, no sooner had it yelped and recognised them all, than it would have been in again!"

"INCHORUNDLE, July 9th, 1864.

"I have been sitting out, writing letters at a table in the shade of the house before our door; and I hear nothing to disturb (and that does not), but the sighing of a gentle breeze among the fir-trees that screen our house, the hum of bees who are all on the *qui vive*, as the heather (the 'cat-heather' it is called) is now coming out, and the subdued rush of the mountain-burn that runs by the side of our house, very quiet and tame now as it pursues its way to the loch, which is as blue to-day as Como: but I have seen it come foaming roaring down with such rage and in such volume as would have made light of a man and horse, sweeping them off like straws.

"We are expecting a visit of the Queen to the Glen in September." (*To Miss Napier, Coates Hall.*)

An invalid friend having sent him the life of Edward Forbes, the naturalist, he thus replied—

"INCHORUNDLE, June 28th, 1861.

"When people send me their own productions, I commonly am in a great hurry to acknowledge the gift, because if you acknowledge the book before you do else than dip into it you are saved the temptation of saying what may be more complimentary than true, or the pain of not being so agreeable as you would like to be. But I was sure that Forbes's life would be an interesting book, and that I could most truly and heartily thank you for it, as I now do. I have read the most of it, which is saying a great deal, seeing that with the loch and river close by our house, and the fine weather we have had, one is tempted to abjure all books but the Bible, and be found all day, not with book, but oar or fishing-rod in hand. I was glad to see that Forbes had been, when a young man in London, regular in Church attendance, and that at his death he expressed a wish to have the Communion administered. One is glad to see any signs of good in such a lovable, able, and delightful man, and to cling to them, although they may not be so strong as one would like. I wish that Christians would



bring to the interests of religion and of Christ's kingdom the untiring energy with which he devoted himself to those of science. What science so noble as the knowledge of Jesus Christ? What honours anywhere in the Temple of Fame like the 'honour that cometh from God'?

"Great and famous as Forbes was, my dear friend, you can do more good by your prayers, shut up to your house, and often to your chamber, than he did, or could do, by all his pursuits and discoveries; and that is comfortable and cheering to you. 'Prayer moves the Hand that moves the world,' and deals with the affairs of a Kingdom, unlike any of those in nature, which shall never pass away. Poor Forbes's life teaches the common lesson, but after a very impressive fashion, of 'Vanity, vanity, all is vanity.' He had hardly reached the summit of his long-cherished ambition, the Professor's Chair, when death hurled him into his grave. May we live above the world, and look beyond it." (*To Mrs. Dymock.*)

The reader will gather from this letter that one of Dr. Guthrie's attractions to Lochlee was the fishing he found there. The Elliot in his first parish was a good trouting stream, but he never thought of fishing while a country minister; he scarcely ever indeed had a rod in his hand till 1848, when, seeking some occupation which would induce him to be out of doors as much as possible, he was advised to try the gentle art; and though no longer young when he acquired it, he became a skilful and ever thereafter a very keen fisher. Generally devoting the earlier part of the day at Lochlee to study or correspondence, he sallied forth, rod in hand, to the river, or to his boat on the loch, with some of his family to row. "We are all *fishing daft* here," he wrote to Miss Elliott Lockhart in 1849. "My brother Patrick says that between us all together he cannot get a word of rational conversation; nothing but 'trouts, baits,



hooks, bobs, drags, flies, dressings, hackle and tackle.' How you would have enjoyed some of our scenes in the boat! This morning I woke about four, and, as the day looked well for it, set up the boys to try the fishing in the *calder* morning air. We had our boat grinding off the beach by a little after five, and brought home seven pounds weight of trout."

"KIRKTON, July 7th, 1849.

"We are in a sort of Patmos here. I could not have anchored in a quieter nook of earth and be within reach of the peopled parts of the world. The liberty of having a boat on the loch is a great enjoyment. I never meddle with the oars, though I hold the helm both in figure and reality. The loch is full of fine trout. We took 11 lbs. weight out of it yesterday, but to-day I would sooner sail the Bay of Biscay than be on it in a boat like mine. It blows a storm above, and below it is one blue foaming sea breaking on the shore—no bad imitation of the German Ocean, as I have seen it at Arbirlot in a nor'-easter. This loch, like the Lake of Galilee and all such mountain-girdled waters, rises on a sudden like a hot angry man: it is soon up and soon down; and—as some one added of such a man—ay, and soon up again!" (*To Mr. G. M. Torrance.*)

Besides herring-sized trout and char, Lochlee contains the great lake trout of Scotland (*Salmo ferax*), to which Dr. Guthrie refers in the following letter:—

"KIRKTON, July 4th, 1853.

"This year we have done wonders with the trolling tackle. Captain Stoddart caught an 8½ and two 7 lbs. trouts; and I, one 8 lbs., one 4½ lbs., and another 7 lbs. weight. I was rather proud of these achievements. The 4½ lbs. one gave more sport than any of the rest, and it needed both prompt and delicate management of rod and line to hold him fast: now, he was down to the black depths of the loch, then spinning away—my reel sounding the liveliest music to a fisher's ear—and by-and-by he was flinging himself bodily four or five feet out of the water.



"But, four nights ago, I gained my greatest triumph. I was fishing for common trout with small loch hooks and a cast of my ordinary gut, when a hook, a small *Green Mantle* which I had dressed that day, was suddenly seized. There was a swirl, and then—to my amazement—away like lightning went the line from my whirling pirn. I was in a moment on my feet in the boat, crying to D——, 'Row, it's a big fish, and my line will be out!' Well, there we were, backing, rowing, wheeling, and, after some quarter of an hour's work or more, we neared the beach, where—leaping to shore—I drew to land a very fine 5 lbs. *Salmo ferox*, which I dispatched that night to Lord Panmure at Brechin." (*To Mr. G. M. Torrance.*)

"INCHGUNDLE, July 13th, 1858.

"I killed a 5 lbs. fish the other evening in the loch. When we got home Charlie said, 'Oh! mamma, if you had seen what a state of excitement papa was in.' No wonder! he ran the line off my reel to within three yards of the end: I was in despair, another few seconds and fish and gear were gone. He just stopped in the nick of time. He was as good to eat as most salmon."

But in the midst of all his recreations (and no boy could have entered into them with more zest), Dr. Guthrie never forgot that he was a fisher of men. His house in Lochlee was seven miles distant from the Free Church; it was not always possible to reach it; and so the very first season of his residence in Glenesk (1849), and while he was yet under medical interdict against entering a pulpit, he began an occasional Sunday evening service in his own house, to which all the cottages within reach sent willing hearers. "I am doing a little in the way of preaching," he wrote. "At six o'clock on the Sabbath evenings I hold conventicle; and in this wilderness you would wonder how many gather. So soon as the fine summer evenings come, I propose taking them to the



quiet churchyard which stands, with the ruins of the old church, and a few aged and weather-beaten trees, close beside us, on the margin and shore of the loch."

"KIRKTON, July 17th, 1849.

"As to the evening conventicle exercise, I grant you that it was too long,—very unintentionally on my part, however, as I began with the full intention of not passing half an hour. I behaved better next night, and intend improving, acting on the saying of an old bishop, who used to say that he liked, not short texts and long sermons, but long texts and short sermons. I have been reading Fowell Buxton's life of late, a most interesting narrative of one of the noblest specimens of human nature and divine grace which the world ever saw; and there I got that sharp saying; as well as Buxton's own, who used to speak of many sermons as 'Bible and water!'" (*To Mr. G. M. Torrance.*)

In the seasons which followed, his audience used to congregate from miles around, on foot, on horseback, in gigs and carts, to these interesting "field-preachings." They were services he greatly enjoyed. Occasionally he preached in front of Invermark Lodge, with the hills girdling the loch in the background. Sir George Harvey has selected this spot as the scene of the picture from which a photograph is here given.

We cannot so fitly conclude these reminiscences of Dr. Guthrie's domestic and social life as by presenting to the reader a sketch of both, with which, at our request, the Rev. Dr. John Ker of Glasgow has kindly enriched this volume :—

"It is no easy thing to put on paper the incidents, and still less the impressions, that come back to me when I think of Dr. Guthrie. Any one who has heard him speak on a great public question, and thereafter perused the report of his speech, .



the most full and faithful, will understand my difficulty. The play of the features, the tones of the voice, so sudden in their changes, and yet felt to be so sincere, because so sympathetic with the subject, the pauses and the speaking look that filled them, the whole life that broke through the speech and made you forget the words and think only of the man and the subject, these were lost beyond recovery. The endeavour to put them in type was like trying to photograph the fit and colour of the northern light. It is in a way harder to give any complete view of what he was in personal intercourse; for while there were the same qualities that appeared in his public speaking, there was even more of breadth and variety. Indeed, Dr. Guthrie's speeches owed their great power to this, that they were a part of himself. Most men, even great speakers, construct compositions into which they put their thoughts, and perhaps their feeling, and then send them forth as a cannon delivers its ball. But he went with it himself altogether, somewhat as the ancient battering-ram did its work, with his soul and body, voice and eye propelled on his aim. This will make it always a difficulty for those who have not heard him to comprehend the power of his speaking to move an audience with quick changes from indignation to pity, and to make April weather of tears and sunshine play over the sea of upturned faces.

"I came in contact with Dr. Guthrie during the last years of his life very frequently; more, indeed, than when he was in the vigour of his life and action, and more in private than in public. He was as erect as ever; he never lost the pine-like uprightness, with its lithe bend that always came back to the perpendicular, and though the black hair had changed to lyart grey, the eye that looked from beneath it was as keen and soft, either for honest wrath or open humour, as ever. The disease that took him away had begun to lay its arrest upon him, and yet very gently—stopping him at the foot of a hill, but allowing him a good deal of 'tether,' as he would call it, on the level. In his spirits it did not seem to affect him at all, only that it disposed him more to reminiscence and description of where he had been and what he had seen, which, perhaps, made him even more attractive as a companion than he could have been when the natural free beat of his heart answered prompt and strong to his resolute will; and it was observed by his friends that the advance of years gave growing comeliness and dignity to face and form, and made him more a subject of curious question to the few in Scotland who had not before seen him, and of pleasant recognition to the crowds who often



had. In its way the inner man kept pace with the outer, so that I think those who knew him last in private knew him also best.

"Of the times I have seen him, both at home and abroad, there are two that specially recur to me: the one at Mossfennan, in Peeblesshire, in mid-winter, where a happy circle met for a week in the hospitable house 'below the Logan Lea,' at whose 'yett' many a visitor has 'lichtit doon,' as did the king, of whom the old ballad sings. The Tweed was grumbling down to Drummelzier under shackles of ice, and the great dome-like hills were covered from cope to rim with the purest new-fallen snow. It was a sight of new delight every morning to look upon them. I recollect the comparisons made with the cupola of St. Peter's, where we had met not long before; and the satisfaction he took in contrasting the men and women of Tweeddale, intelligent, independent, and God-fearing, with the subjects of Pio Nono, who was then in power, as we had seen them, begging with his badge around the Vatican.

"He was vigorous for work, and preached with all his old fire in the church of his son-in-law, Mr. Welsh, whose guests we were. At Mossfennan the time passed like a summer's day. When not occupied with reading or correspondence, Dr. Guthrie was the centre and soul of the conversation. He seemed to be able to watch its course even while engaged with his work, turned aside to confirm or correct some observation, to give some anecdote or recollection, and resumed his train as if absorbed in it. I remember specially the long evenings when we gathered round the blazing fire—the wood log flanked with coal, and, as in Cowper's picture of comfort, 'the hissing urn' and 'wheeled-round sofa.' He kept himself free and disengaged for these seasons, and, to the hour when he retired, threw into the conversation an unflagging life that was wonderful. The stores of his reading, but particularly of his personal observation and experience, were poured out in exhaustless flow, with shrewd remarks on human nature, vivid pictures of landscapes, or comments on Bible scenes and passages. Anecdotes, generally from his own knowledge, formed a prominent part, and were accompanied by a rapid and vivid sketch of the actors, so that the narrative was a set of portraits. It would be a mistake, however, to think that he engrossed the conversation on these occasions. Whether it came from the instinctive nature that was in him, or from some set purpose, he made it his object to draw out contributions from all in the circle. The interest he showed in whatever any one had to tell was un-



affectedly genuine, and one could see how he accumulated the stores of illustration and anecdote that he poured forth, gathering them, however, not to tell them again, but for the love of them. Often, when an anecdote struck him as good, he would ask the owner of it to repeat it for the sake of some newcomer, and he enjoyed it as much in the rehearsal as at first. I have always remarked that this inclination to draw out others to advantage, and to *encore* their contributions, is a sure token of a kindly and unselfish nature.

"Another thing that struck me about him was his tendency in the midst of a theme that was exciting his feeling too strongly—some indignant outbreak against injustice or meanness—to give it a ludicrous touch that dissolved it in humour. One felt it to be not levity, but depth, the recoil from what is too painful to think of, when thinking can serve no good. It seems to be a principle that humour is given us as a sort of *buffer* to make the hard collisions of life more endurable, and that those need it most who have the heaviest freight of feeling. Some great earnest natures want it, but the tear and wear tells more heavily on them. One thing, however, was not discernible in his humour: he had no power of mimicry. His narratives were of the epic kind, given with his own face and voice, without any perceptible attempt at dramatic impersonation. I suspect he had naturally a deficiency in this direction of imitation, but probably also he had set himself against the cultivation of it. He had an instinctive sense of the *ne quid nimis* in every way, and though he did not at all say of laughter, 'It is mad,' he seemed to be putting the question to mirth, 'What doeth it?' One felt that there was a limit and a solid base to all the exuberance of his humour, not laid down in any dogmatical or formal way, but maintained naturally by the rest of his character, always sincere, earnest, and Christian.

"There is a story told of William Guthrie, author of the 'Christians' Saving Interest,' that on one occasion he had been entertaining a company with mirth-provoking anecdotes, and being called on, afterwards, to pray, he poured out his heart with such deep-felt fervour to God that all were melted. When they rose from their knees, Durham of Glasgow, a 'grave solid man,' as he is described, took him by the hand and said, 'Willie, you are a happy man; if I had laughed as much as you did a while ago, I could not have prayed for four-and-twenty hours.' The characteristics of the old Covenantaners of Fenwick reappeared in his namesake. There may have been Durhams too in his company, though I never heard of them. Presbyterian Scotland has not so many men colour-



less in their gravity as some think ;—yet I am sure that after the family prayer they would have risen with the same confession in their heart.

“ But I recall Dr. Guthrie in connection with another locality, where he found each summer an escape from the hurry of life, and, what is worse, its forced artificialities : an opportunity for being entirely one's self, without fear of having the coat and conduct criticised simply for their plainness :—to withdraw for the holes in them is another matter. It was a simple country house in the highlands of Angus, which he held by a kind of feudal tenure—akin to that expressed in the motto of the Clerks of Penicuik—‘Free for a Blast.’ Once a year at least, Lord Dalhousie looked for a sermon from him in the Glen,—a condition he carefully kept, with a large excess of measure.

“ During our stay at Mossfennan, it was arranged that we should pay him a visit at Lochlee in the coming summer, and accordingly in July, 1871, when the days were long enough to let the sun look down into the deepest corries of the Grampians, we set ourselves to carry it out. I was one of a party with his son-in-law Mr. Welsh, and his daughter Mrs. Welsh, and it was from them I came to learn some particulars of the way in which he both rested and worked, particulars on which he himself would not have entered. He was waiting for us with a hearty welcome at the Brechin Railway Station, having come down the twenty-four miles to meet us, and take us up Glenesk in his waggonette.

“ Having remained all night in the house of his son James, a banker in Brechin, we drove up to Lochlee on the following day. About seven miles out of Brechin, we struck the river North Esk, soon after passing Edzell, whose castle, the ancient home of the Lords Lindsay, is imposing even in ruins. My first view of the river from Gannochy Bridge I can never forget. Dr. Guthrie caused the conveyance to halt as we reached the centre of the noble arch which spans the foaming stream seventy feet below, and as I gazed first up the stream and then down, I felt that his enthusiasm was amply justified. The river chafes in its narrowed channel, with here a rush and there a leap, twisting and wrestling among the rocks—brown, yellow, black, and white by turns. Fine old woods of oak come sloping down and bend wonderingly over the chasm as if on tiptoe, while beyond them rise on either hand the mountains that form the gateway to Glenesk. Some





**SABBATH IN THE GLEN.**

FROM THE ORIGINAL PICTURE PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE HARVEY, P.R.S.A., FOR THE LATE EARL OF DALHOUSIE.







ten miles higher up, we passed a bare hill-side called 'The Rowan,' thickly covered with stone cairns, more frequent towards the valley, and scattered singly towards the height. It was the site of some great and seemingly decisive battle in those times from which history cannot lift the veil. Strange to look on this spot, now so lone and silent, and think of the currents of heady fight that must have swept across it, whether of Scot with Piet, or both with Dane! Dr. Guthrie's imagination kindled at the scene, and he indicated what he thought turning-points in the struggle. It forms a vivid illustration, in one of his works, of the importance of maintaining the key of the position.\*

"For miles, our road lay along the birch-fringed banks of the Esk, whose waters are formed, as I found on reaching the upper part of the glen, by the confluence of two streams, named respectively the 'Mark' and 'Lee.' The latter emerges from a wild glen on the left, after flowing through the lonely Loch Lee, on whose margin stood the house for which we were bound. This sheet of water, a mile in length, might not have struck one much elsewhere, but here it gave softness to the mountains, and drew dignity from them. A kind of bluish-grey colour seemed to float over it, and proved how true to nature was the eye of the old Celt, for Loch Luath is the 'blue-grey loch.' Before it opened on our view, we passed the grey peel tower of Invermark Castle; and, close by, the tasteful shooting-lodge of Lord Dalhousie, where Queen Victoria has twice passed a night. At the upper end of the lake, a white solitary dwelling could be discerned under the ledge of the mountain: it was Inchgrundle, Dr. Guthrie's Highland home—no house beyond for many long miles of moor and hill. As we went on, our road unwound itself to the right, cut out of the mountain, whose toppling rocks rise high overhead, while the water breaks on the beach many feet below; custom and care brought our conveyance at length safely to the door.

"Any one who has been in the habit of hearing Dr. Guthrie, or who has read his books, must know that there were two voices above others in nature he had listened to and learned. Wordsworth calls them the voices of liberty:—the one of the sea, the other of the mountains. At Arbirlot he learned the first; at Lochlee the second. Standing before the door of that Highland home next morning, I looked around. Opposite, across the little loch, was a great mountain, on the ridge of

\* "Christ and the Inheritance of the Saints," p. 315.



which the red deer could be often seen feeding against the wind, as their custom is, and a whole world of wild beauty was spread out in crag and wood and waterfall. Looking up the glen, the boldest feature is Craig Maskeldie, rising over the valley to the height of 1,200 feet, an almost sheer precipice, the Erne Crag beyond, while, between them, the river at one leap descends a lofty ledge of rock in a snow-white cascade, filling both eye and ear. Half way up the hill behind the house, lies a tarn or mountain loch, encircled by a rocky wall that shoots high above it many hundred feet, a kind of Cyclops' eye glaring up under terrific brows, a weird and fearsome spot at nightfall. We visited these and other spots, Dr. Guthrie accompanying us to the foot of the hill, telling us what to look out for, and questioning us minutely on our return. He knew every feature and mood, and inquired after their looks with the fondness of an old friend. The little objects about him had been caught, set in the memory of his heart, and came up when working in the town or writing from abroad. A splintered rock, with an adder he had seen lurking below it, became the emblem of man's ruined nature, with the poison and the sting beneath. A single tree that crowns the top of a rock amid the wreck of a fallen mountain, shows where grace can rear its trophies. The reeds by the loch-side bending to the sudden breeze, call up the stir of the heart under the mysterious Spirit's Breath. The wild ducks starting from the rushy covert, and in a moment out of reach, are the riches that fly away on wings. The walls of a deserted shieling at the foot of Craig Maskeldie give a glimpse of patriarchal life gone by, and take up the lament for the exile. The little ruined church seen at the lower end of the lake is a symbol of the deserted shrine of the soul on which 'Ichabod' may be written. A fitting memorial of him, and one of the finest books of illustration for that part of Scotland, would be a collection of these word-pictures, pointing to higher meanings, and assisted to the eye by truthful sketches.

"One day we made an excursion by the lake to the old church at its end,—for Inchgrundle, like Venice, had always choice of a road, by land or water. On the occasion of our excursion he took his rod with him, being very anxious that I should catch one of the 'char,' for which the lake is noted. My attempts were unsuccessful, but he soon drew one out himself, and entered on the history and edible qualities of the fish. The monks had, as he believed, introduced it as a delicacy for the sake of the fast-days, little thinking, added he, that they were providing food and recreation for a Presbyterian minister!



"We landed at the old church, so close to the lake's margin that the dash of the waves must have sounded in chorus to the singing of the Psalms, and explored under his guidance the small roofless ruin, whose site carries us back to the times of the Culdees. For there, according to tradition, stood the Church of St. Drostan, the nephew of Columba, (a common name also in the royal Pictish line,) and the same name is still preserved in the farm of 'Droustie' in the neighbourhood. Close by the ruined church is the deserted schoolhouse (the church and school having been transferred farther down the glen). This humble dwelling was the home, a hundred years ago, of Alexander Ross, the Allan Ramsay of the North, who wrote 'The Rock and the wee pickle tow,' and was the author of 'Helenora, or the Fortunate Shepherdess.' The latter work is very much an unknown one now, even to Scotchmen; it is a pity, for it contains descriptions of scenery and life which betray the eye and heart of a true poet, and traces of customs and traditions not to be found elsewhere. His house must have been the smallest in which even a poet ever lived, the largest of the two little rooms being only ten feet square; and yet, looking up and down the valley, nowhere else could one imagine a better application of the '*parva domus, magna quies*.'

"On the day of our visit, however, there was a stir about it, such as must have given Alexander Ross some of his pastoral pictures. The work of sheep-shearing was going on busily behind the old churchyard. On these occasions the shepherds from all the country round are accustomed to help one another, so that we had representatives from far and near. I was struck by the way in which Dr. Guthrie passed from the memories of the deserted church to the humanities of the present; yet it was the same element in both which interested him. He had not much fancy for mere stone and lime antiquarianism; but he touched ground when he came to the human. He was on terms of thorough acquaintanceship with his neighbours. He seemed to know every face we saw, and the names of all the absent, and the shaking of hands reminded me of the welcome given by the people to the minister at a Scotch ordination. There was on his part an absence of anything like the patronizing air, and on theirs, a mixture of manly independence and respect. One was introduced to me as 'the mathematician,' and another as 'the poet.' He had discovered their tastes and qualities, and set himself to draw them out with a playful humour that never hurt their honest feelings, and that left a brightness on their faces at parting.

"He was engaged at the time of my visit with his Auto-



biography, though the information about it was given me in confidence, as he knew not how it might turn out. Every one will now regret that he did not begin it sooner :—and those most, who have heard his narrative of the men and times that have gone to carry forward the Presbyterianism of Scotland to a new period, which will take rank with its famous epochs. In our conversations, the affairs of the Church often came upon board, and the heroic period of the Free Church, its Wallace and Bruce epoch, was dealt with in fond and bright recollection, contrasted with the disunions and recriminations which at that time were vexing the Union Question.\* But he spoke kindly of those from whom he differed widely, and hopefully, too, of a solution sooner than many expected. ‘I cannot help liking him, for all that is come and gone,’ he said of one of the leading anti-unionists : ‘he is a fine fellow at bottom.’

“His leisure times through the day were spent in curious studies of plants and animals, with quaint Christian emblems drawn from them, and regrets that the conventionalities of the pulpit would not always permit of their use there. As the evening deepened, so did his discourse ; and one could see by what a profound well of religious feeling his life had been freshened in his work for his fellow-men. In the household prayer his heart was open, and the fulness of his affection for the members of his family, scattered now over the world, for the brotherhood of faith, and for all men, was poured out in his own strong and fervid words.† It is not of this, however, that I have to speak so much, as of the familiar traits about him that one can refer to with less delicacy, but that are very helpful in individualizing him. I observed that in his prayers on these occasions he had a certain rhythm in his voice, and that

\* See Chapter XIV.

† “At family worship,” writes Mrs. Mayo (“Edward Garrett,” one of his *collaborateurs* in the *Sunday Magazine*), “the household was joined, not only by the permanent occupants of the lonely farm, and by any gillie who might be in the vicinity, but also by the tramps who might be earning a few days’ shelter by a little field work. For these waifs, the Doctor had ever a kindly word and inquiry, and a special clause in the prayer. It was touching to see the dull faces brighten, and the shuffling forms draw up, as, on their second appearance, they found that their names and any special circumstance about them was duly remembered. . . . I love to think of the Lochlee evening ‘worship’—the chapter, the prayer, the psalm—with just his dearest about him, and those few weather-beaten shepherd folk, shut in by the awful mountain silence, only broken once and again by the bay of a hound or the shrill pathos of some wandering gillie’s bagpipe.”



the foot often kept an audible accompaniment, evidently without his being conscious of it. I think it is characteristic of his speeches and sermons also when in a certain mood. I believe he never wrote a line of poetry in his life, and yet the bees of Hybla seem to have been humming in the air without finding where to settle down. I do not know that we have any reason to regret it, for the poet-orator does his work no less than the poet proper. When we had psalms or hymns sung through the day we had the accompaniment of a harmonium, but the instrument was silenced at family praise. I asked the reason, and found that it was an offering to charity. The housemaid, an attached member of the family, belonged to that staunch and worthy section of the Christian Church, the Original Secession, and she had a strong dislike to instrumental music in the service of God. He could not bear that her edification should be marred, and, though his face was turned forward in these things, he had a kindly feeling for that sturdy Scottish period when the old woman, as he said, declared that 'she would have naething sung but Dawvid's Psalms, ay, and Dawvid's tunes to them!'

"For obvious reasons, the references in his memoir to his family relationships must be slight; therefore a visitor may touch this subject as relatives cannot. He was blessed of God as few are by the absence of severe trial, and by the rich gifts of household affection. He lost only one child (I believe, in early infancy), and all the others, six sons and four daughters, grew up to man's and woman's estate, without ever causing his heart a pang, or his eye a tear. Though some were separated far from the home hearth, a place was always kept for them there, as fresh as when they left it; their letters came to it as a centre to be sent round the circle, and their father's letters—when from home—were often printed to be made common family property.\* Next to the love of God, his spirit was sustained in his last days by the love of his children. While the united firmness and affection with which he dealt with them had much to do with this, it was not the whole. Only those who looked more nearly knew how much both they and he were indebted to the wife who still survives him, and how she did her part in her sphere no less fitly than he in his. Related by ancestry and kinship to ministers on all sides, she had the experience and

\* Some of these were bound up in a volume with this inscription:—  
"To my two sons, Thomas Guthrie, near Buenos Ayres, and Alexander Guthrie, in San Francisco, these letters are dedicated with the prayers and very affectionate regards of their father, Thomas Guthrie. 'The Angel which redeemed me from all evil bless the lady!'"



sympathies of her place. In one thing she balanced and supplemented his nature :—with clear judgment, deep feeling, and a native sense of becomingness on all occasions, she had a quiet, even temperament that calmed his impulsiveness, and gave him that soothing which to an imaginative nature is strength. He might have flown as high without her, but he could not have kept so long on the wing. Latterly—as birds flutter homeward at night-fall—this became more manifest, and though he could traverse the world in his vigour alone, in his later years he could only journey, and be well, in her company.

“Dr. Guthrie used to spend his Sabbath intervals reading and sitting before the door with the loch and hill in front, not making passages for sermons, but drinking in the spirit of things about him, and reviving his own nature. He never himself gave a hint of any of the illustrations he had made use of, and when he spoke of the scenery it was with the feeling and words of the moment, not as seen through the eyes of his own parables. He had—more than most men—the power of laying down his burden of prophecy, and enjoying what was before him; and this made him no doubt all the stronger when he took it up again. It is the old story of the giant, who got power from his mother earth, or the deeper Christian truth of the child’s heart within the man that makes him more manly in God’s kingdom. In the forenoon of the day, we worshipped with the Rev. A. McIlwraith and his congregation in the little Free Church at Tarfside; and, in the evening, he insisted on my taking the sermon, instead of himself, in the hall of Lord Dalhousie’s Lodge. Our service that night was a kind of alliance meeting. The Rev. Walter Low, an Established Church minister, led us in our singing; the Rev. W. Welsh, a Free Churchman, in our prayers, and the sermon was by a United Presbyterian. As we stole homeward in the gloaming, under the shadows of the hills, Dr. Guthrie spoke of it in his sanguine way as an earnest of peace after wars still waging, and of the hope we might have of progress, when we had met so quietly in Christian worship, close beside the keep of the Tiger Earl, who was, centuries ago, the terror of the north.

“The more I saw of Dr. Guthrie, my feeling deepened that he was the same man in private as he appeared in public, and that his work was the outcome of his life. He had the same two poles to his nature—indignation and pity; indignation that rose against the enemies of justice and freedom, and pity, not only for all human kind, but for the broken reflections of it in dumb suffering life as well. And playing between these



poles was a lambent humour that helped to make pity more soft, and wrath more keen. Besides the one Book, there were two he was always reading—nature, and human nature; not with other men's glasses, neither telescope nor microscope, but with his own natural eyesight, opened by a genuine, loving interest. Of the two, I should say he preferred human nature. He loved not nature less, but man the more. His way of looking at a landscape was the opposite of Claude Lorraine's, with whom scenery is everything, and men in the foreground only lay figures. And yet his love of nature was very deep and genuine, as any man could see. He carried it in his heart to the city, and hung up its pictures in his mind's eye to keep himself and his hearers natural and fresh amid the din and dust. His study of God's word was of a similar kind,—through his own vision and heart. He carried the man and the Christian to it, more than the historical or doctrinal critic. Deep down in his nature were fixed, what are called in Scotland, 'the doctrines of grace;' and with these, as a part of himself, he handled the word of God. I recollect hearing him relate a critique on his 'Gospel in Ezekiel' in some Unitarian journal. 'Dr. Guthrie,' the writer said, 'seems to believe that Ezekiel signed the Westminster Confession of Faith.' 'A very fair hit, that!' he remarked, laughing. It was fair, and yet not quite fair; for I do not believe that, in his exposition at any time, the Confession of Faith was a measuring rule in his mind; but he had within him a conviction of a renewed humanity which he carried to the Bible, as he carried a natural humanity to the hills and woods, and he heard them speak accordingly. He was by no means ignorant of the critical historical school, but theirs was not the method which suited him. His mind moved not in the logical, but the analogical plane, and swept forward, not in the rigid iron line of the railway excavation, but with the curves of a river that follows the solicitation of the ground. And so, too, his sermons were constructed. They had not exhaustive divisions enclosing subjects, as hedges do fields, but outlines, such as clouds have, that grow up by electricity and air; or such as the breadths of fern, and heather, and woodland had on the hill-side opposite his door, where colour melted into colour, with here a tall crag pointing skyward, and there an indignant torrent leaping headlong to come glittering out again among flowers and sunshine. Some tell us that analogy is a dangerous guide, and that metaphors prove nothing; but where they rest on the unity between God's world and man's nature they are arguments as well as illustrations.



"Every man of warm, sensitive feeling grows into his surroundings as nature puts a tree—say a silver-barked birch or a red-stemmed mountain-fir—just on the bank or point of rock where the painter's pencil loves to find it. The kernel is sown there by some curious law of adaptation, and it draws congenial nourishment from soil and sky to become a sort of index finger to the landscape, or an eye through which its expression looks out upon us. When the visitor to that sequestered spot stands by the ruined church of St. Drostan, and one of the kindly natives of the Glen points to the simple house that looks down on the soft blue-grey loch, and up to the sweep of the great dark hills, he will feel there is a fitness in the bond which the place must always have with the clear-eyed, warm-hearted, large-souled Thomas Guthrie."



## CHAPTER XIII.

### INTEREST IN OTHER LANDS.

ALL his life long the subject of this Memoir was ready, as in the French *cabaret* of which he tells in his Autobiography,\* with the frank avowal, "*Je suis Ecossais.*" In one of his letters from London he mentions being present at a lecture entitled "Rob Roy Underground," which was given in St. James's Hall by Mr. John MacGregor, of the Inner Temple, on behalf of a Ragged School and mission for the Poor. "Mr. Kinnaird was chairman, and at the close I had to rise and take speech in hand, to move him a vote of thanks. Oddly enough, the lecturer (though born at sea) was a Scotchman; so was Arthur Kinnaird, the chairman; and so was I, the only other speaker;—a conjunction which suggested to me the story of the gentleman who, on landing in Jamaica, found a negro going along the streets of Kingston, bawling out at the top of his lungs, 'Scotch shrimps! Scotch shrimps!' He challenged *blackey* with telling a lie, as it was impossible that fresh live shrimps, caught in Scotland, could be found so far away, and in so hot a

\* P. 101, Vol. I.



climate. Whereupon, the *darkey*, cleverly hitting off and illustrating our nationalism and clanship, pulled up a shrimp, to which another clung, and to it, another, and so on, till there was a string of them dangling in the air, and replied, 'Massa, look, are not these *Scotch* shrimps?' I told my brilliant audience in St. James's Hall the story, as one which the circumstances of the evening recalled to my mind,—and I must say, to the credit of their good sense and love of a little humour, they were greatly entertained with it."

In listening to Dr. Guthrie, it was not difficult to discover his national origin. Yet, Scotchman both in tongue and feature as he was — nor by any means destitute of the prejudices of his countrymen—he was, in the best sense, cosmopolitan as well. "In the minds," as Dr. Duff writes, "of the Evangelical Christians of England, the United States, the English-speaking population of India, and all our colonies, the name of no Scotchman, and assuredly of no Free Churchman, since the death of Dr. Chalmers, bulked so largely as his."

The opportunity which as a young man he enjoyed of spending the winter of 1826-27 abroad had an influence on his whole future life; and, though thirty years elapsed till he again left Great Britain, a desire to see more of the world haunted him through all the busy interval. No kind of reading was more congenial to him than books of travel; they stirred his imagination, and furnished him with illustrations. He enjoyed old-fashioned "Voyages," like those of Cook and Byron,



and devoured the latest volumes of Kane or Livingstone.

"But for my wife," he writes to Miss Elliott Lockhart, on 2nd July, 1857, "I half believe I would not have seen you again till my return from Australia. It would have been a grand tour; away by the Mediterranean, down the Red Sea after a sight of the Pyramids, touch at Singapore, &c. My wife would not hear of it; so we are back here (Lochlee), and, after all, I don't know that I could have gone, being afraid of overwork."

The Rev. G. Divorty, formerly a minister in the colony, furnishes us with an explanation of this proposed visit:—"After the Synods of the Established and Free Churches were pledged to each other to unite, an attempt was made on the part of several brethren of the Free Church to re-open the whole question. This ultimately led to a painful separation, in which several ministers and elders took up a distinct and independent position. The majority of the Free Synod, finding all their efforts to effect a reconciliation fruitless, resolved to apply to the parent Church in Scotland to send out a deputation, in the hope of healing the breach. They took the liberty of suggesting the names of several ministers whose visit would be most likely to have favourable results; and at the head of the list was the name of Dr. Guthrie.

"As an instance of the jubilant feelings entertained at the prospect of a visit from him, a rich settler stated that he had marked off twenty acres of land, which



he intended to present as a gift to the distinguished visitor, in order, as he said, 'to make him an Australian laird.'"

Though he declined the mission, it was not without much hesitation:—"I feel as if I may be turning my back on duty," he wrote to Sir George Sinclair, "in refusing to risk even health in this service. I have identified myself with the cause of Christian union here, and am I justified in staying at home when its cause requires my aid abroad? I trust that God will guide me to a right decision. What is your advice? Give it me." After finally yielding to the remonstrances of his friends on the score of health, he again wrote to the same correspondent:—"I see that, owing to my proneness to excitement, I would have run no small risk of bringing back my old heart-malady. I cannot take things coolly:—an evil in one sense, good and power in another."

The Rev. R. H. Lundie, of Liverpool, mentions that, after his own return from the Holy Land, which he had visited in company with the late Dr. Norman Macleod, Dr. Guthrie proposed to join him in some future visit to Palestine, and frequently conversed with him on the subject. There was no spot on earth he so longed to see, but he dreaded the fatigue of travel in the East; and when Mr. Lundie met him for the last time, and asked if he still entertained the idea, his reply was, "Ah! friend, I must wait now till I see the New Jerusalem."

A visit to the American continent seemed more



attainable. For years he had this in view. Time after time urgent invitations were addressed to him to visit Canada and the States. Not, indeed, that he was popular in all quarters across the Atlantic:—his abhorrence of negro slavery was too intense to admit of silence. In proportion to his dislike of the system was his admiration of those who had the courage to denounce it. When Mrs. Stowe visited this country, after the publication of "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*," Dr. Guthrie was one of the first to welcome her, and spoke at a monster banquet given in her honour in the Music Hall, Edinburgh. He refers, in a letter dated 25th April, 1853, to her appearance and his own speech on that occasion:—

"Mrs. Stowe wears her honours most meekly; sat unmoved in that great assembly, her countenance quite placid and calm, without much or any expression or appearance of talent. But I set up the lioness! I was quite amused and pleased with that. I was just separated from her by her brother and husband, so that I had full opportunity to see the effect. Her eye kindled, and her whole face beamed with mind and feeling. I could compare it to nothing so much as when the light inside a glass shade has been reduced to the size of a pin-head, and you put on the gas; then how the globe lights up!

"... Her brother (Charles Beecher) told me that her extraordinary talents — the talents of '*Uncle Tom's Cabin*' — appeared very early, and have been all along well known to her family. The pictures of her are hideous caricatures. She looks much better than any of them; not what you would call a pretty woman, but quite comely."

"I have been often asked to go to America," he said in 1859, at a meeting held in Edinburgh to express sympathy with Dr. Cheever. "I have the highest opinion of the United States; and it is because I love them, that



I wish this foul blot (slavery) removed from their escutcheon. If that were done, it would be a happy day for the world when they march south to Cape Horn with their Protestant truth and liberty. They have promised to frank me to and fro. I will tell you plainly and publicly why I will not go. If I went, I could not keep my temper! I could not go and see a fellow-creature—a little child or a woman—set up to auction to be sold; it would stir my blood, and I could not hold my tongue. I could not stand the sight of such things in the South, and there are things also in the North which I could not stand. I could not go into one of their pulpits, and look on a sea of white faces, and then behold some poor negro, in whose beaming eye I discern a loving heart towards my blessed Lord and Saviour: I could not see that man standing in a corner, and professing Christians refusing to sit down with him at the Lord's table—the man who, perhaps, will go into the kingdom of heaven in front of them all. These are things which I could not stand.

“In the months of August and September here, I see clergy of every denomination, and men of every profession. I throw open my doors to them, and I am never happier to see any than Americans; but I make it a moral duty, when they are breakfasting with me, to dose them on the subject of slavery. And it has always seemed to me, that the moment I touch upon that subject, it is like getting near a man or woman with corny toes!”



All through the protracted struggle between North and South, Dr. Guthrie's sympathies were strongly pronounced, nor did he ever lose faith in the ultimate success of the Northern States. We remember the morning when, in April, 1865, as we were starting from the railway station at Naples for Pompeii, Mr. Bonham, the American Consul-General, came up to Dr. Guthrie with the startling intelligence he had just received, of Abraham Lincoln's assassination. Except in the cases of the awfully unexpected deaths of Dr. Chalmers and Hugh Miller, we never saw him so much stunned by any evil tidings as on that occasion. Once and again that day, notwithstanding the absorbing interest of the buried city which he then visited for the first time, he reverted to the subject in terms of deepest sorrow and indignation.

In 1867, along with the late Principal Fairbairn and the Rev. J. Wells, Dr. Guthrie was deputed by the General Assembly to represent the Free Church to the Presbyterian Churches of America. He was aware to some extent of the ovation which awaited him across the Atlantic, and he began to fear that too much was expected of him in the way of speaking. He therefore wrote to Mr. G. H. Stuart, of Philadelphia—

*" March 18th, 1867.*

" I doubt that you don't know what a 'winged bird' I am. I have preached none since you heard me in London, and have been obliged to give up all pulpit and platform work.

" I am in the enjoyment of better health than I ever had at any period of my life, and I never was in better spirits; but the least nervous or muscular strain affects me to a degree a stranger could have no idea of. Indeed—but for the hope that,



as every drop adds to the stream, I might, through this expedition, help to a kindlier and more brotherly feeling between the sea-divided members of the same family—at my age, and with my infirmities, I could not have undertaken the enterprise. Nor did my medical advisers consent to my going, but on condition that I would *ca' canny*.

"Beyond speaking briefly at the Assemblies, I must undertake no public work, with one exception—this, namely: I would like in one or two places, where there was a likelihood of getting money, to plead the cause of the Waldenses to a select audience . . . . This object I would ever have in view, that I may turn my time and travel to some good account, out of, and beyond, my denominational circle. Of course I must not forget that I am a delegate from our Presbyterian Church to Churches Presbyterian, and so must do my best fully to discharge what belongs to my office. I don't know yet what use I may make of the materials I collect; but my object will be to see, not merely what is new and interesting, but what is creditable and honourable to the *stars and stripes*. Every shield has a gold and copper side. We have seen more than enough of the latter. I want to see your gold side, and, when I return, show it here.

"I was one of the few in society in this country, or in England, so far as I found and knew it, who stood stoutly up for the Northerns, after Abe Lincoln's New-Year Declaration abolishing slavery in the rebel States; and I feel it to be a duty to do what I can to present the States in such a light to the people here as shall make some ashamed of themselves and of their feelings, and go to foster and ripen that kindlier disposition which has begun to become more general and developed toward our brothers across the sea.

"You know now what I am aiming at. Have the kindness to think how I am best to reach it . . . ."

On 6th April, 1867, with Mrs. Guthrie and their youngest son, Charles, he sailed by the Cunard steamer *Scotia*, from Liverpool for New York. But, to his own intense disappointment—as well as that of the many who awaited him on the other side—after being two days on board, he was forced to relinquish all his plans, and leave the vessel at Queenstown. The peculiar heart-affection



from which he suffered made the air of a ship's cabin at night intolerable to him at any time; and on that occasion it so affected his nervous system that, while grieved, he was thankful to go ashore. "Letters have just arrived from New York," he writes a few weeks subsequently. "An awful disappointment to them, but, I believe, life to me. A hundred and fifty people were invited to meet me at a private house on the Thursday evening I was to have arrived. I was to be addressed, and expected to address in return. The same, arranged a day or two thereafter for Philadelphia, and elsewhere."

He made the acquaintance of many American Presbyterian Professors and ministers both in this country and when travelling abroad; and, in Dr. Adams and Dr. Cuyler, he had friends of special value. Leading men of other denominations also he occasionally met. When visiting his friend Mrs. Herschell, at 28, Westbourne Terrace, London, in November, 1870, he writes—

"I was so glad to meet here yesterday evening that venerable man, McIlvaine, Bishop of Ohio; his name having been for the last thirty years associated in my mind with all that was most zealous and orthodox and liberal in the United States. His head is white, his face with an intelligent and singularly sweet expression, his person tall, and his manners those of a perfect gentleman. Sprung of a Scotch Ayrshire or Galloway family, as his name indicates, he belongs not to the northern or Irish, but the Gallowegian Celtic race. He is seventy-two. We had much interesting talk. He had heard me in Free St. John's ten years ago. When I gave thirty years for the disestablishment of the Church of England, he considered that too long a reprieve. He has been much here with Canterbury and the bishops."

In 1867, Dr. Guthrie's fourth son, Thomas, went to com-



mence life in Buenos Ayres, and in 1869 the fifth, Alexander, in California, while in 1868 his relative and early friend, Dr. M'Cosh, was installed as President of Princeton College, New Jersey. All this gave him thereafter a fresh and personal interest in both the great continents of the New World; and, notwithstanding his former experience of shipboard, had his life been prolonged, he would have attempted to reach the West once more. The following letter presents the explanation:—

“January 8th, 1872.

“I have got now more definitely than before plans for an expedition to America in my head. If I had had any doubts about my power to stand the sea voyage, these would have been cleared off by my late experience in voyaging to and from the Orkneys and Shetland. Leaving Kirkwall at six o'clock on Saturday evening, we were all night at sea, and did not reach Lerwick till five on Sunday morning. I was advertised to preach there in the afternoon. I made for the hotel, tumbled into bed, and rose to my work at one, wonderfully fresh.

“Then on our return, after staying some two or three weeks in Shetland, I had a thorough trial of my powers. We had a rough sea between Lerwick and Kirkwall; but between Kirkwall and Scotland a tremendous one; and out of a large number of passengers, with the exception of one, I was the only person not laid flat on their backs. I read in the cabin till I was driven out by the *groans*; after that, walked on the deck, admiring the magnificence and majesty of the scene. Standing with the captain by the bulwarks, there rose beside us, as if it had been blown up by a torpedo, a dome, or rather pyramid, of water, high as our funnel. Seeing what was coming, I threw myself down close by the bulwark, hoping to escape a *sousing*; but in vain; an avalanche of water broke down on me and the captain. But I was none the worse; it was there and away through the scuppers,—I, with a very heavy woolly topcoat on, shaking myself like a Newfoundland dog. They had it in Shetland that I was *knocked down* by a wave—so reports go!

“All I need at sea is fresh air, and I understand that can be secured now in the Atlantic steamers, by getting a cabin on deck.”



In view of thus accomplishing his long-cherished wish to visit America, he had written to his son in California, sketching a lengthened tour of a year, and added: "If God spare and bless us, such, in a general way, is the plan I intend to carry out; ever bearing in mind the uncertainty of life and all earthly things. May we be ever ready, having a sure interest in Jesus Christ and his redeeming work, to leave this for a better world. . . . If I go to your quarters, it will be with two resolutions,—first, to bind myself to no work; secondly, let 'Jonathan' have his own way, advancing the most anti-British and extravagant statements, without calling out an answer from me, unless when I meet a man of sense and piety in a quiet corner. What I will aim at, will be to pour oil on the *waters*, not the fire; and to strengthen the brotherly and Christian bonds that should unite us together." The failure of his health terminated this purpose, as well as many others.

Shut out thus from more distant shores, his journeys were confined to the Continent of Europe, some portion of which he visited latterly nearly every year.

It was in 1856 he saw Switzerland and the Alps for the first time. The unsullied snows, the pine-clad gorges, the glaciers, the blue lakes, and delicious atmosphere, inspired him with an absolute enthusiasm, which found vent in exclamations of astonishment and delight. "The works of the Lord are great, in wisdom He has made them all!" were words repeatedly on his tongue. On his return to Edinburgh, he would ask his acquaintances,



"Have you seen Switzerland?" and when the reply was in the negative, "Then save up as much money," he would add, "as will take you there. You will get a new revelation of the Creator's glory. I say to everybody, see the Alps before you die!" He had great faith, moreover, in the power of travel to enlarge men's minds, and brush away the cobwebs of prejudice: "It would be a healthy thing for him" (he wrote, in reference to one of his brethren in the ministry), "to get away, for a six months' tour, from the *ecclesiastical atmosphere* in which he lives."

The one drawback to Dr. Guthrie's enjoyment of Continental travelling, was his want of familiarity with modern languages. It was no wonder that he found his French, since 1827, grown rusty; of German he knew scarce anything—as the reader may judge from his description of an incident in 1856. The scene was a village near Kehl, in Germany, and not far from the French frontier:—

"Sauntering out before breakfast, we found an old grey-headed man, attired in black, standing opposite a respectable house in the village, and directing a youth who was pruning an acacia. He had something of the air of a scholar and a gentleman, although his black was a little rusty. We concluded him to be the pastor; so, doffing my hat, I made a polite bow, and addressed him in French. I am sorry to say, for the honour of the cloth, he was as innocent of any knowledge of that tongue as the village folk, who, like great—but honest-like—louts, only roared and laughed when I *parlez-roused* them. The minister and we were obliged to give it up. However, I was anxious to know whether he was really the pastor;—so furbishing up some little Latin, I returned to the attack on a Roman charger, carried my point, and held a short conversation. He was no more *gleg* at the Latin than I was; indeed,



he was full as rusty, about as rusty as his coat, but the honest man parted with David and me with many bows and much politeness."

It was to him a strange experience to find his fluent tongue become a stammering one. He made persevering efforts, however, to talk to the country people when travelling abroad, and (to use his own phrase) "hammered away" wonderfully; finding, when in Over-Yssel, in the Netherlands, in 1867, that his Forfarshire broad Scotch was not without its use.

"I only regret I do not know the French tongue more thoroughly," he writes from Martigny in 1856. "I would *jaw* to everybody, and gather a vast mass of interesting knowledge. Everybody, Papist and Protestant, man and woman, grey-haired patriarchs and the sucking child, Donald of the Highland hills, or a shepherd of the Alps, all like to be spoken to, and treated as bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh."

Even nearer home, he had been driven to curious expedients in the way of communication, as we gather from a letter written at Ballachulish in 1859:—

"We found an old, bowed, grey woman of eighty within. Our English friend, Miss Bunting, saw the economy of a Highland cabin, very dark and comfortless. However, we found the lamp of light and life in it—a thick well-thumbed Gaelic Bible. The old woman had a pleasant smile; but not one word of English could she speak or understand. We communicated, or attempted to do so, by signs, with complete success, at least in one instance. I saw something like a byre; wished to know if she had a cow; pointed to the hovel, and *rousted* and *mooed* like a cow, at which she laughed, and signified that she had one.

"I never felt more the imperfection of earth as compared with heaven: many languages here, but one there. That poor *bodie*, a nice-like old woman, who may have been a bright saint,



was isolated from me, and I from her; she as a beast to me, and I as one to her."

And yet, a strange language had a kind of fascination for him. Describing a Sunday spent among the Celts of another part of Britain, he writes from Wales, in the same year—

"The place of the parish clergyman, who is a devoted and excellent pastor, was occupied by an Oxford-like *birkie*, who gave a sermon which had one great merit,—it was under twenty-five minutes in length. Socrates or Plato would have done better.

"I was much more pleased, if not edified, yes, I say *edified*, by the worthy Calvinistic Methodist we heard in the forenoon, though I did not understand one word he said. His fervour, and earnestness, and rude but telling oratory, were really improving. I am always glad of an opportunity of being present where God is worshipped in, to me, an unknown tongue: it is to my mind the most impressive of all sermons on His omniscience, and that He is the common Father of us all."

Thus he was greatly pleased when told of a remark made by the Roman Catholic landlord at Chur (Grisons), who had entered the room accidentally while Dr. Guthrie was conducting family worship in the Hotel. At its close, this man, addressing Mr. Thomas Sinclair, of Belfast (one of the party), said solemnly in reference to the prayer of which he knew not one word, "*Ach! Gott versteht alle Sprache!*" ("Ay, God understands all tongues.")

He was of too social a nature to enjoy a Continental trip, as some do, alone; in addition, therefore, to members of his own family, he generally found himself, on reaching Dover (to use his own playful words), "with



a 'tail' near as long as a comet's!" On his first visit to Switzerland, the party was joined by the late Principal Cunningham, of whom, in the tribute he paid to his memory from the Moderator's chair in 1862, he said: "William Cunningham has carved his name on the very pillars of our Church; a lion in the battle-field, he was a lamb at home." The evening when we approached Chamounix, the two Doctors were riding side by side, a short way in advance of the party. The sun had set on the lower parts of the valley; while, to our great disappointment, the summits of the mountains were shrouded in mist and drifting cloud. All of a sudden, we were arrested by a loud shout from Dr. Guthrie, who had pulled up,—and, with wonder and delight on his upturned face, was extending his arm towards a rift in the clouds, where, like a fragment of some brighter world, a snowy peak shone aloft in rosy light. "Saw ye ever the like of that?" he cried in his enthusiasm. The learned Principal of the New College, dropping the reins on the neck of his mule, pronounced the sight, in his calm matter-of-fact style, "*a very marvellous combination*,"—a statement which he clenched by taking a long and leisurely pinch of snuff.

"CHAMOUNIX, *June 24th, 1856.*

"No man has seen the glory of God in nature—the majesty and magnitude of our Heavenly Father's work—who has not seen the surpassing and altogether indescribable spectacles of this valley and these mountains. With perfect propriety and reverence I would reply to any man who should ask me on my



return what I saw, in the words of Paul, used on his return from heaven : 'I saw things unutterable !'

"I awoke this morning at four, left my bedroom for the parlour, from which I had been told the night before I should see the very summit of Mont Blanc, if it were to be seen (for we did not see the veritable dome last night). I threw open the window, and there, still untouched by a sunbeam, the whole range, in pale pure white snow, rose up before my astonished gaze. In a moment I had roused the others, and while we stood gazing with solemn silent admiration on the scene, the summits flashed into golden light,—silver changed in an instant into burning gold. That scene and moment are never to be forgotten. I immediately descended to waken Dr. Cunningham, who speedily appeared. Top after top, peak after peak, crown after crown, blazed and burned in the sunbeams."

An early start for an expedition among the mountains found Dr. Guthrie the first of his party astir, and his buoyant glee on such occasions sometimes brought him into trouble. At Interlacken, with a long day over the Wengern Alp in view, we remember his thundering, before five o'clock of a brilliant summer morning, at the doors of his party, one after the other, along the corridor of the Hôtel Bellevue. He was for the time manifestly oblivious that the said hotel was not his own dwelling-house—a fact which was recalled to mind by the sudden apparition, from behind a door, of the white nightcap and black beard of an irascible little Frenchman, who, in loud and indignant tones, exclaimed, "Vat for you make dat great noise? it is much shame," &c., &c.; and, before Dr. Guthrie had time to recover from his astonishment, and tender an apology, the white nightcap and black beard were withdrawn, and the bedroom door violently slammed from within.



TO REV. WILLIAM HANNA, LL.D.

"INTERLACKEN, July, 1856.

"He who would see the majesty of God in His earthly works should certainly come here. The drawback is the natives of this glorious land. Idiot faces and enormous goitres, sallow, squalid, depressed-looking men and women looking out at you from the little window-holes of their wooden houses, and troops of young beggars, are a horrible nuisance. However, one suffers every day more pain far, by walking down our own High Street. Give me goitres and cretinism a thousand times rather than the sallow dying infants that lay their weary heads on the foul shoulders of our drunken mothers. I go home (God bringing us back in safety) more than ever resolute to bear my living and dying testimony against the drinking habits of our people. We saw Paris in the midst of its gay excitement and holiday enjoyment at the baptism of the young prince. I have purposely visited, by day and in the evening, the lowest quarters of many towns we have rested in, and—save an *ouvrier* uproarious in Paris, and a Bacchanalian chant I heard on Sabbath night in Berne—I have not seen nor heard a sign of intoxication since I left our own land.

"I did not see that difference others have marked between the Protestant and Roman Catholic Cantons. But, be he Protestant or Papist, I think it is a bad position for the perfect development, either of a man's physical or mental nature, to be shut up in a glen, whether of the Alps or Grampians. We have been often struck with the marked resemblance of aspect between the population in some of the Swiss valleys and that of our own glens; they have both a dirty, depressed, indolent-like appearance. Could we get our towns kept from growing too large, and the means of grace and education applied to the whole body, I am persuaded that man is best located when he stands, as forest-trees stand, surrounded by neighbours. Living much by himself, he becomes selfish; and, away among the mountains, he is in his views and feelings apt to become as narrow as the valley he lives in.

"We heard Mr. Forbes\* preach here on Sunday, and then at the close of the service he dispensed the sacrament. Mr. Welsh, David, and I joined. It was very solemn and impressive to join in the communion of the Lord and Saviour that day, in a distant land, in an old Roman Catholic Convent, with the Episcopal Church."

\* Now Rev. Dr. Forbes, English Chaplain at Paris.



TO MADAME DE LA HARPE.

"INTERLACKEN, July, 1856.

"We have had glorious weather since we left you. God has blest us with brightest skies, perfect health, and preservation from all accident to life or limb. I have been greatly interested; and am going home, if I can find time, to make myself a thorough proficient in the French tongue, as I want to come back, on hard and determined business, to gather information on many subjects which interest me; and, by setting which before the public at home, I think I might do some good before I die. I trust we shall go home with greater love to our fellow-men, a warmer interest in their welfare, and a lofty resolution to live more for large and loving objects, to glorify the Maker of this glorious world, and Him who hath redeemed it by his blood. Would that He had entered into possession of his purchase, and that we felt sin to be as great and loathsome a deformity to the soul, as these most hideous and horrible *goîtres* are to the body!"

"INTERLACKEN, July 4th, 1856.

"I was deeply interested in my visit to Dr. Guggenbuhl's Training Institution for young *cretins*, and looked with reverence on this celebrated man. He is a noble example of one who has cast all personal interests and pleasures of a common kind behind his back, and who has devoted himself, with illustrious perseverance, and patience, and self-denial, to the glory of God and the good of his fellow-creatures. I saw, too, some young ladies there, who, having been trained in an institution for the rearing of Protestant deaconesses, had devoted themselves to works of benevolence; and I thought that this world has few nobler sights to offer for our admiration, than that of a young woman who has left the world below, and ascending that mountain (the Abendberg), and to the very heights of self-denial and noble benevolence, spends the live-long day with a poor imbecile on her knee, with gentle voice calming its irritable spirit, tenderly subduing its unruly passions, and with kind hand opening up the sheath of its unblown faculties."

"FRIBOURG, July, 1856.

"We got here to breakfast, and set forth without delay to see the Cathedral. Above the door is a curious representation in stone of Christ making the worlds. The Bibles of these old papists lie open in the stony letters of their cathedrals, and, for myself, I would like to see that old taste revived which met



you with the grand and glorious truths of religion everywhere, and carved the history of the world and its salvation on all manner of buildings. They made the very wood and stone of the walls to speak. I know some would cry out against this as Popery; but that is pure prejudice and senselessness, and the sooner people are taught so the better, and learn to judge a thing on its own merits, without regard to those with whom it originated or the purpose to which they applied it. The fact is, that there are superstitions and prejudices and blindness to truth and narrowness of mind, disgracing Protestantism, to be found among ourselves as well as among Papists.

"Popery is here seen, *not* in these outside sculptures, but when you get within; as when, in that Cathedral, I saw rational beings in adoration before some tinselled, painted doll, representing the Virgin Mary, nor lifting an intelligent eye or thought towards Him who laid the foundation of the everlasting mountains which rise high in serene sunny majesty above their heads."

"LUCERNE, 1856.

"One day an old woman came on board the steamer on the lake here, with two wooden baskets containing live trout. This old body was a philosopher in her way. Every five minutes or so, she got the boatman to draw up fresh water and supplied the element to her trout, and between times kept shaking the baskets with the water and trout. Thus, she provided her live-stock with a constant supply of fresh air, which trout need as much as we. We noticed that all the time she was *shaking*, she was also *praying*. The conservation of her soul went on with the conservation of her trouts. She was a happy, fresh, brisk old body, full of smiles and nods, and, although a blinded Papist, was earning an honest livelihood, and one was happy to see *her* so happy, apparently pleased with herself and every other body. She had the happy art of extracting pleasure out of all things and little things, which is an art we should cultivate along with a sweet and sunny temper. This brightened the old body's Popery, and lowliness, and poverty. It adorns the Truth."

"BRUSSELS, July 23rd, 1856.

"I sit down to write you some account of the grandest fête-day \* we have ever seen, or are likely to see. The only regret which your mother and I had was that we had not all of you

\* The Jubilee fête to commemorate the accession of Leopold I.



with us; seeing that while all the spectacles were beautiful, some parts of them would have thrown the *bairns* into ecstasies—that exploding, overflowing ebullition of joy which it is perhaps as great a pleasure to see as to feel. . . .

“Amid these crowds, I was pleased to see manifestations of much kindness toward each other. One father’s love for his poor half-idiot son I was greatly struck with. The youth may have been sixteen or eighteen years of age; head, body, and limbs quite feeble and feckless. The father, a plain labouring-man, with the marks of hard work on him, had thrown the poor object over his shoulder, and bore him on his bosom, the head and arms of the simpleton hanging over his back. When they came to any display more than ordinarily brilliant, he stopped in his walk with his heavy burden, and the poor boy rolled round his head to see it. The father was resolved that his son’s dark life should borrow some passing gleams of joy from the public festival, and he walked these streets a beautiful moral spectacle. You saw in him the tenderness and the wisdom of God, in making us kindest to the helpless: and how kind, to use a common proverb, Providence is to *fules* and *bairns*.”

“GHENT, July, 1856.

“We went last night to hear vespers sung in the convent chapel of the Beguines. We had travelled with some of the nuns, who bore in their calm, meek, pale faces such an air of purity, kindness, and benevolence, that I was anxious to see them in their own home. . . .

“They really look happy; that is to say, they have a serene aspect—peaceful, if not joyous. I don’t wonder at it. Their life is one quite fitted to develop some of the finer and more beautiful elements of the female character. They are much engaged in religious exercises; they distribute bounties among the poor; they visit the sick; they have a school and teach the ignorant. In fact, bating their superstition, they spend their lives much more usefully, and I believe much more happily, than many of our Protestant ladies,—who (having no family cares to occupy their attention, and not giving themselves, like some of my good female friends, to works of philanthropy and religion) are useless members of society, encumbrances on the social machine;—in all senses of the word the ‘non-productive class,’—living to themselves, and therefore getting sour in the temper, perturbed, and *drumly* as all bodies that stagnate are apt to do. Although I know people will call it Popery (when it is only common sense), I believe,



were our unemployed, or often ill-directed, moral, benevolent, and religious power organized in some such way as in some well-regulated Roman Catholic institutions, there might be many good persons employed doing good who are now next to *hand-idle*.

"There is nothing in a nun's destiny or employments so opposed to a woman's nature as there is in a priest's or monk's to a man's. In the offices of the latter, there is nothing to cultivate the mind or keep the faculties from rusting. It would need an extraordinary miracle of grace to keep any man who had, day by day, to go through that weary round of gesticulations, and genufluxions, and mumbled Latin, from becoming an animal or an infidel. The rate at which some of them get over the ground in the Mass is quite astonishing; I can liken it to nothing so much as the *beat* of an express train, when it rushes past you as you stand on the platform."

Returning to Switzerland in 1861, Dr. Guthrie took part in the General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance at Geneva, and preached in Calvin's city. He thereafter went to Sion, in the Rhone valley, and from thence to Zermatt. While there, some of his party (his eldest daughter among the number) crossed the St. Theodule Pass on foot into Italy; he himself and the others remaining overnight at the chalet on the Riffelberg. Of that evening, Dr. Guthrie in writing home recounted an incident—

"GENEVA, September 10th, 1861.

"At last we reached the Görner Grat, where we stood 10,000 feet above the level of the sea, and where I gave some of my friends a snow-balling. Sitting there, a very fashionable and clever-like woman, with keen black eyes, set herself down beside me and began to lecture me on the improvements of the lower classes, the necessities of education, the importance of sanitary regulations, &c. I received her remarks most submissively, just dropping a word once and again to show that I was not altogether a complete ignoramus in these matters. I was amused at the end of this. Having gone



away to look at something on a bed of snow, her husband, who had had some dim suspicion of me, had committed his thoughts to her. She asked your mother; and when I returned, she rose, shook me most cordially by the hand, told how happy she was to meet me, how she always read my papers in *Good Words*, and ended with a perfect torrent of apologies for having presumed to instruct me! I was much amused at this affair 10,000 feet above the sea; and this lady and all of us struck up a great friendship. She undertook to doctor me; and, to please her, I swallowed I know not how many globules of aconite and belladonna, time about, to cure my toothache."

Eight years thereafter, when Dr. Guthrie was in Italy, he wrote from Florence on 10th May, 1869—

"The other day, in the Galleries of the Palazzo Ufizi we unexpectedly encountered friends. While seated, and engaged in conversation with some Americans, a lady, with a gentleman at her back, plants herself before me. I noticed a queer, knowing smile on her face, but she said nothing. I had a vague notion that I had seen that face, those bright black eyes and that sharp look, somewhere before. And so it turned out. Waiting for, and, when it came, seizing a pause in our discourse, she advanced, smiling and holding out her hand, to say, 'Dr. Guthrie, I think?' I was to begin my usual speech, 'I should know you perhaps; pardon me, but I have a bad memory; you must tell me who you are,' when my recollection suddenly returned—sufficiently at least (though I could not recall her name) to make me jump to my feet, and exclaim, 'My friend of the Görner Grat, 10,000 feet above the sea! Is it not?' So it was; and we were very happy, as you can fancy, to meet again."

He spent six weeks in Brittany, in 1864; choosing Quimper, the *chef lieu* of Finisterre, as his head-quarters, in hopes to escape, in that extreme corner of France, from the crowds of tourists by whom the Continent is now overrun, and because he learned that the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists maintained a Mission station there.



The Rev. James Williams, who at that period was their representative at Quimper, along with his family, contributed much to the comfort of Dr. Guthrie and his household.

"HÔTEL DE L'ÉPÉE, QUIMPER, FINISTÈRE, FRANCE,  
"March 21st, 1864.

"I am glad that I was led to think of coming here; there is so much in the houses, habits, manners, and dresses, to say nothing of the tongue of the people, that is strange, interesting, and entirely new. The men are the most grotesque and picturesque-looking fellows you ever set eyes on. The stoutest quaker would hesitate about wearing a hat of such breadth of brim. Under these hats, down to their feet, the male sex show varieties of costume according to the parish or district to which they belong. So do the women: and this makes the streets and markets the finest, funniest, most entertaining spectacle you could see anywhere in the world. Some of the men wear three jackets, the upper one not reaching six inches from the armpits. These are of bright blue, often with rows of bright brass buttons set as thick as the tailor can place them, and in addition their edges are set off with yellow braid. Round the waist some wear a broad parti-coloured sash, others a very broad leathern belt fastened in front with a buckle as large as a good-sized saucer. The hat, which is at once a hat, a parasol, and an umbrella, carries two or three broad bands of black velvet, which fall down the back, and carry tassels at their ends. Some wear breeches of which knickerbockers are a poor and feeble imitation,—enormous bags with plaited folds, exactly such as you may see the courtiers of Queen Elizabeth painted in.

"But, perhaps, the oddest thing in the appearance of these peasants is the long hair which falls out of the enormous slouched hats of the men, overshoulders and back. They preserve their hair more carefully than did Samson his; and the young good-looking lads get from this (as they shave lips, cheek, and chin) the appearance of women. The older men (whom poor food, and hard work, and years have deprived of their beauty), showing a wild eye and sallow thin face out from these shaggy, long, black locks of tangled hair, have all the appearance of brigands or savages.

"While the men are proud of their *manes*, the women, except in one district, don't show a lock. This fashion the lasses



(who, notwithstanding, with their picturesque dresses and singularly odd but striking caps, look very pretty) turn to good account; selling their hair to pedlars, who send it on for front-lets and wigs to adorn the old age of Paris,—getting a good sum for the first crop especially. . . .

“This is an awfully Popish place and country; the Bretons being the most bigoted followers of Rome in French territory. While we were in a horse-fair to-day we heard the ‘Angelus’ sounding one, two, three—one, two, three,—and then nine strokes without a pause. I was struck to see some of the Bretons pause in the thick of their talk and bargaining, to take the hats off their long-haired heads, and, bowing, remain for a minute or so engaged in silent prayer. I take it that those who did so were devout and earnest people, for the greater number paid no heed to the call as it came swinging from the tower of the distant cathedral.

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“After leaving Quimper, we visited Carnac and Lok-mariaker. In these two places we found more Druidical remains than you will see in England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, &c., during months of travelling. From the top of a tumulus called Mont St. Michel you look down on the great field of the Carnac *dolmens*, and *menhirs* or upright stones, which form eleven parallel rows terminated by a semicircle. They were 12,000 in number once, but are reduced to 1,200 now; churches, villages, farmhouses and dykes having found in them a ready quarry. All the stones are granite. Some are enormous boulders five or six feet in diameter; others, upright stones, from eight feet to eighteen or twenty—one, now broken and prostrate, measures sixty feet in length.

“It is an amazing sight. Nobody can find a key to them: some say they formed the grand avenue to a great Druid temple; others, that each was a memorial stone to a warrior who fell in some great battle. The popular idea among the peasantry is this, that these great grey granite stones were once an army of pagan giants, who were changed by St. Cornelius into stone! They say that on a certain night of the year these old stony fellows are allowed to leave their places, and resume a sort of life; that they go staggering away to the sea-shore; and that any person who is clever and quick and bold enough to watch this change, and visit their holes before they come rolling back, will find in each hole a rich treasure buried. They tell that a man one night was fortunate enough to hear these petrified pagans talking. From their conversation he discovered the night of their



approaching change and freedom. He took into his confidence a pious youth whom he found carving a cross on the side of one of these giants. He engaged this youth to help him, without warning him, however, of the danger—wishing him, in fact, to be killed, that he himself might be sole possessor of the secret. Well, they watched. At a certain hour of the night the whole field moved, and away went the giant *Menhirs* to pay their visit to the sea-shore. The man leaped into one hole after another, and had possessed himself of a vast treasure, when, hearing the thundering of the stony giants on their return, he made off without warning his companion; but he was not to escape. Like Avarice, he overdid the thing. He had not time to get out of their way, and was crushed to a jelly. The other, still more exposed,—was pounded? No! A stone came thundering up to the poor fellow, who was saying his last prayer; but when close beside him it pirouetted round. It was the stone on which he had cut the sign of the cross!"

"PARIS, April 26th, 1864.

"On our journey from Chartres, we passed some fine châteaux: one had been the residence of the great Sully, Henry IV.'s minister, who, I am sorry to say (though himself all his days adhering to the Reformed Faith), advised his master to become a Papist in order to gain Paris over to his side. It was a fatal affair for France. If Henry had trusted to God, and stood out, France might this day have been the greatest of the Protestant Powers. The cause of the Reformation was once strong in France. Rennes, where we worshipped with some thirty of a congregation of Protestants, had once a Protestant population of ten thousand souls. Louis XIV., by revoking the Edict of Nantes, ruined the cause of the Reformed Church and the interests of France. Seventy thousand Huguenots emigrated to the Low Countries, and, while thousands came to us across the channel, only the dregs remained; and when these facile souls were driven into the Popish churches from sheer terror, that great scoundrel Bossuet, who prostituted his brilliant talents to the basest purposes, extolled his licentious master for the deed, as a grand defender of the true faith and conqueror of heresy. The Roman Catholic Church and the Bourbon race reaped, in the cruelties and horrors of the Revolution, what they sowed in the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The Revolution merely overthrew what through all manner of vice had already become decayed—like an old tree, its heart eaten out, and little else left than a shell."



Dr. Guthrie had visited the north of Italy in 1861, but it was not till 1865 he saw its present capital :—

“ROME, 186, VIA DEL BABUINO, *April 8th, 1865.*

“It is its connection with the great Apostle that, to me, gives to Rome its greatest interest. I felt, on entering the city, that now, for the first time in my life, I was on ground peculiarly sacred, in so far as these streets had been trod by the feet of an inspired man—the greatest of all the Apostles. The Appian Way by which Paul approached Rome still exists, as it did more than eighteen hundred years ago, and in not a few places you see and walk on the broad large stones that paved it then, and so I knew that I walked on the very road he had trodden. I sat on the tomb of that Horatius who held the bridge, and fancied that I saw the Apostle and his companions, who had landed at Puteoli, and, travelling northward, were now making their way across the Campagna,—the Imperial City full in their view. But my sense of connection with one whose name has been to me, from my earliest days, a household word was most vivid of all two days ago, when, in the Basilica, or Hall of Justice in the palace of the Cæsars, I stood within the ruined walls that had rung to his voice as he pled before Nero. I saw the very platform on which his bloody and imperial judge had sat. Laying my hands on the fragment of the marble balustrade that enclosed the advocates and members of the Court, I placed myself in the centre, right in front of Cæsar’s judgment seat, and felt that I was in all probability standing on the very spot Paul occupied when he boldly maintained the truth, not only in the face of Nero, the Roman power, and all mortal and hellish foes, but under the desertion of all earthly friends; no mortal on his side—God only;—a most touching and sublime scene described in those affecting words, which I found it impossible to stand there and pronounce unmoved :—‘At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.’ His persecutors and the enemies of God’s truth survive only in their infamy,—their proud palace a vast ruin; but Paul’s name is and will be held in everlasting, affectionate, and honourable remembrance; and so God even in this world makes good His word—‘them that honour me, I will honour.’”



"Rome, April 24, 1865.

"We spent the whole of yesterday, from half-past seven in the morning till half-past ten at night, in an excursion to Tivoli, a classic spot. The whole of the Campagna is at present green, and begins to be covered with wild flowers; large anemones, some of a rich purple, others blue, standing on the pastures as thick as gowans. There were seven or eight *vetturinos* besides ours, carrying out visitors from Rome; and as they all started about the same time, and the roads were very dusty, the occupants of those behind were, men and women both, like dusty millers. We kept for most of the way ahead—our *jarvie*, who had only one eye, and was, in more senses than one, single-eyed, being bent on losing sight of all things else to prove the truth of his oft-repeated boast, that his were the best *cavalli* in Rome.

"A pretty row this led to! A carriage, with fewer to carry, cut past us. Here was dust for us, and an insult to our charioteer. Up he fired; and, sending out from his throat the most extraordinary cries to his horses, away he went, and away we went, and away went the opposition coach; and here, amid a whirlwind of dust, we were in for a regular race on the Campagna! I saw, if this were not stopped, there would soon be a collision and a crash, for the blood of the old Romans was up and boiling, both in rival men and horses. In vain I cried to the fellow, in French and English and mongrel Italian, to stop; in vain Mr. Purdie, who sat beside him on the box, did so in good Italian. He only glared round on me with his one black, fiery eye; nor was it till Mr. Purdie seized the reins, and I, getting to my feet, fixed my hand in the neck of his coat, and had well-nigh pulled him clean back over on the heads of the frightened ladies in the carriage, that we stopped our friend, and averted a catastrophe and a collision that would soon have made us, not breathe only, but bite the dust. . . .

"Of all the places in the world we have yet seen, Tivoli beats all for beggary. It seems to be the occupation of its six thousand inhabitants; the very sucking infants, before they have learned to speak, are taught to hold out their one little paw, as they hang with the other round their mothers' neck. You are astonished at the most decent and well-to-do-like people, as you pass, opening their palms. The thing is so bad as to be perfectly ludicrous. You are at first angry, and storm and rage, and end with roaring and laughing. I gave them a peppermint lozenge at length, with which they were at first greatly pleased, thinking it ten *baiocchi* (or five pence); but, on discovering the truth, they would come after us to tell us the



mistake,—expecting, no doubt, silver: I gave them nothing but a sign to commit the *sweetie* to their mouth; and, after my peppermints were done, pretended not to understand them, but, as if I thought they intended a friendly salutation, I would take the open hand and give it a friendly shake!”

“ROME, April 14th, 1865.

“On ‘Holy Thursday’ I went to St. Peter’s, and saw the Pope. . . . We heard him with wonderful distinctness as he rolled out the blessings from the balcony over the great door of the church, a hundred feet above where we stood. In volume of sound his voice is equal to Spurgeon’s, and more musical in tone.

“Originally a mere man of the world—noble by birth, by profession a dashing officer—the present Pope spent years in the keen pursuit of worldly pleasures; found them as, whether Protestant or Papist, sooner or later all do, unsatisfactory; came under serious impressions; knowing no better, sought peace and refuge in the service of a corrupt Church, and ere long rose to his present tottering and troubled position. And now, one grudges a devout, amiable, and kindly old man to such a system of falsehood and superstition. His expression of face is one of great kindness and geniality. No doubt of it, Pio Nono is a lovable-looking man, with the air of a perfect gentleman; in fact, we are all agreed that the Pope is the best bit of Popery, and that if he would turn a good Presbyterian we would be proud to see him in the Moderator’s chair!

“The Cardinals, with a few exceptions, are very ordinary-looking men—one of them, the head of the Dominicans and chief inquisitor, a hard, *dour*, cruel-looking fellow. To —’s horror, on my being told ‘that’s the chief inquisitor,’ I said, pretty loud, ‘An ill-looking fellow; I’m glad I’m not in his hands!’ which only produced a good-natured smile from a priest close by, who proved his knowledge of English by afterwards speaking it to us.

“Even in the matter of architecture, I am heretic enough to think St. Peter’s a failure. There are too many colours in its various marbles, and too much glare in its profuse gilding, to produce any feeling of veneration or solemnity. But perhaps I was not in good enough humour to be an impartial judge. I had no patience for pictures, marbles, or frescoes, with such a loathsome sight before me—such degradation of mau, such a practical denial of Jesus Christ and the doctrines of his Cross.



I stood there, to use the words of Argyll on the scaffold, 'with a heart-hatred of Popery.'"

"Rome, April 15th, 1865.

"After returning from paying a visit to the Castle of St. Angelo (originally called and really Hadrian's Tomb), and also to the splendid Villa Borghese, when I was reposing on the sofa to recruit before dinner, Carron, Mr. Kirk's\* courier, came in to say that the parish priest had come and wished to enter.

"What on earth can a priest want with us? We had just seen the *oubliettes*, fourteen of them, and the dreadful dungeons in the Castle of St. Angelo, where the popes of old confined their victims, who, blindfolded, were carried to the castle, and, dropped into one of these dark bottles of places, were never heard of more. We had seen the very caldrons in which they boiled the oil that they applied, boiling, bubbling, and seething, to the living flesh of heretics. Was this, then, some apparitor of the Inquisition, sent by the Pope to look after us, to take us up for some of our loose speeches (for it is impossible to hold one's tongue among the abominations and idolatries that stir one's spirit within him here), and to revive in our persons the horrors of St. Angelo, with its 'oubliettes' and boiling oil? So, jumping up from the sofa, I said to Carron, 'What does the parish priest want with us?' 'To bless the house, sir,' said our courier, 'according to custom.'

"Well, as we had no right, civil or ecclesiastical, to stand between our landlady (who has a strong look of Julius Cæsar, and a temper as hot as the sun of Italy) and any good the blessing of the priest could do her house in keeping it free of demons, ghosts, rats, mice, bugs, fleas, or bad lodgers, we said, 'By all means let him enter.' And enter he did, with a timid and shrinking look, half ashamed, I do think—when he saw himself in the presence of those he would suspect to be Protestants—of his occupation. We rose, and bowed politely to him as he came in, in full robes, accompanied by a little boy, also robed, and carrying in one hand the priest's cap, and in the other a vessel with holy water and the brush. He stepped to the middle of the floor, and then, opening a book which he carried, began to read with amazing rapidity, the boy here and there singing out 'Amen.' Suddenly he seized the brush, dipped it into the holy-water pot, performed a sprinkling,

\* The late Mr. Kirk, M.P. for Newry, who, with his daughter, Mrs. D. K. Guthrie, was of the party.



galloped over a few more sentences, and then retired. I was sorry for the poor fellow. We tried to be as courteous to him as possible : he was a quiet, modest, meek looking lad.

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"We have seen Raphaël's far-famed picture of the Transfiguration. Our Lord's face is extraordinary in its conception, wonderful in its expression. At Bologna there is another very wonderful face of our Lord, where he appears as a 'Man of Sorrows;' *that* is the most affecting thing I ever saw in colours. It is impossible to look on the one without feelings of adoring reverence and confidence, or on the other without deep emotion, hearing, as it were, a voice appealing from the canvas : 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.' . . .

"People talk a deal of rubbish when they get into raptures about the 'Great Masters.' In my eyes, by far the greatest number of their paintings fail in any degree to move or elevate the mind or stir the affections. The old pre-Raphaelite masters did throw an air of devotion over their tableaux—and not a few of them were, I believe, really devout men ; but as to those about whose pictures people go (or, to be thought possessed of fine taste, profess to go) into raptures, few of them move or elevate my mind, or stir my affections. Their men and women are sensuous animals, flesh and blood, but with little of real, homely, human life. Their very martyrs are poor creatures ;—*bonnie* men and women, whom you think—(they are so placid and good-looking)—it was a pity to kill; that is all. I got clean tired trailing through long weary galleries, seeing pictures I was told I should admire and could not. There is more nature, life, and expression which come home to one's head and heart in some of Hogarth's and Wilkie's paintings, than in almost any of the famous pictures of these famous 'Masters.' I speak my own judgment ; and thousands talk of the 'Masters' as a parrot would."

"NAPLES, 211, RIVIERA DI CHIAJA, April 25th, 1865.

"I wish, instead of dawdling away our time among the mummeries and flummeries of Holy Week at Rome, we had come here earlier, and had more time to study the stupendous phenomena of a land which is so full of the power of God, and which, for the first time to me, illustrates these grand words of Scripture, 'He looketh on the earth and it trembleth ; He toucheth the hills and they smoke !'

"If any one have six weeks to spend between Naples and



Rome, I say let him give four weeks to Naples and its surroundings, and two to the Eternal City, as it is called. At Pæstum, you see, in the temples of Ceres and Neptune and the Basilica, far more perfect examples of old temples than any Rome possesses, with the exception of the Pantheon. All around Naples again, the country is exquisitely rich and lovely—a garden of Eden, but for sin: the glorious Bay, with its cloudless sky and cerulean sea; Vesuvius, the Solfatara, and other volcanic wonders; and, above all, that most impressive of all cities, Pompeii—the City of the Dead, as Sir Walter Scott called it,—which makes you better acquainted with the habits and daily life of the old Romans in one hour, than you would be in Rome in a twelvemonth.

“At Puteoli (Pozzuoli), in memory of the great Apostle, I bought an old Roman lamp from a priest who had abandoned masses to collect and sell antiques. He may be a suspended functionary.—I don't know; but he was very polite and pleasant, and not more given to cheating than his countrymen, who will charge treble the price they will take, and whose dishonesty and greed culminate in the cabmen, who are loud and demonstrative in their demands beyond the tariff, and to whom, as they follow me with their vociferations and gesticulations, I always roar out as loud as they, in good English which they don't understand, ‘*Summon me to the police court!*’ This has a wonderfully calming influence. They get no other answer; they make nothing of it, and at length abandon the pursuit.”

“FLORENCE, May 12th, 1869.

“We met Longfellow the other evening at the house of Dr. Van Nest, the American Presbyterian minister here. He is very like his pictures, simple and quite unaffected in manner, mild and gentle, full of a quiet suavity. Mrs. Newall got out of bed on purpose, contrary to all my remonstrances, and, though groaning at every step, climbed the stairs, half creeping like a snail, half carried up like a corpse. What will a high-spirited, enthusiastic woman not do—at least, not attempt? It is this which gives value to their services in every good cause. On introducing my good friend to Longfellow, I told him that he should regard the presence of this pale, bent, crippled admirer as one of the highest compliments ever paid him. Neither in his eye nor manner does he exhibit a spark of enthusiasm. But he is a very thoughtful-looking man.”



"BERNE, 17th June, 1869.

"Like reading for the second time any book of remarkable goodness, beauty, and interest, this, my second visit to the scenes through which we have been passing, has afforded me, I think, more gratification than even the first. The surprise is less, the curiosity less, but the taste is more highly gratified—the last affording a nobler pleasure, being the higher feeling of the two; less allied to the vulgar surprise and stupid wonder of the honest woman who, on seeing a blackamoor or negro for the first time, and, after gazing on God's image in ebony, exclaimed, 'Heeh, sirs, there's mony a thing made for the penny!' . . .

"We have seen the celebrated clock of Berne. With a number of other strangers, we were gazing up from the base of the old tower at noon. The hand approaches twelve. Bang! there it strikes. We see the king, like a musical leader with his bâton, signal the strokes with his sceptre; we hear the *cock*, who bends his neck back to crow the warning; we see the *fool* shake his head, and ring his bells; while aloft, two giants hammer off with mighty strokes the mid-day hour on the great bell above the bartizan. It is a very old, very curious, and very ingenious piece of mechanism. My excellent friend, Mrs. Newall, afraid of the rain, did not venture out; and half in joke, half in earnest, pronounced it 'a toy.' Well, I was, and hope may ever be, child enough to enjoy such a thing; enjoying everything—Punch and Judy among the rest—that brings a sunlight smile on children's faces."

Intensely as he relished tours like these for their own sake, Dr. Guthrie could not be satisfied to go abroad merely to recruit and to derive enjoyment. He liked to combine with these ends some definite purpose of Christian usefulness. Latterly one of the British Vice-Presidents of the Evangelical Alliance, he was in thorough sympathy with its objects. On two occasions he left home in order, primarily, to take part in General Conferences of the Alliance, which he addressed at Geneva in 1861, and at Amsterdam in 1867, on his favourite schemes of Christian and social reform.



In the Second General Assembly of the Free Church (1844) he was named as one of the Committee appointed to correspond with Foreign Churches; and when, in after years, he had opportunity of personally visiting their spheres of labour, his interest in these Churches was greatly quickened. With many French Protestants, specially the Monods, MM. Fisch, Bersier, Bost, and Professor St. Hilaire,\* he was on intimate relations. In Brussels he addressed the Synod of the *Eglise Missionnaire Belge*, as a deputy from the Free Church, in 1867. In Switzerland, too, he held repeated intercourse with the late Drs. Merle d'Aubigné and Gaussen; and in no house on the Continent were Mrs. Guthrie and he so much at home as in that of their much-loved friends, Professor and Madame de la Harpe, of Geneva.

But the country in whose spiritual needs, during his latter years, he was led to feel the greatest interest was the Italian Peninsula; and, of all the agencies there, his heart was chiefly drawn out to the ancient Church of the Waldensian Valleys. To every other agency at work for the evangelization of Italy he wished God speed; but he was convinced that the finger of Providence pointed to that small but interesting Church as deserving a foremost place in the sympathy of British and

\* Prof. Rousseau St. Hilaire published, after his friend's death, a graceful tribute to his memory, entitled "Thomas Guthrie: sa Vie son Œuvre, et sa Mort." Paris, 1873. "Son jugement," is M. St. Hilaire's felicitous remark in that *brochure*, "était aussi calme, aussi sûr, que son imagination était hardie et vagabonde."



American Christians, and a Benjamin's portion of their help.

The Rev. Dr. Stewart, of Leghorn, Moderator of the Free Church General Assembly in 1874, when speaking of Dr. Guthrie's loss said, "I gladly seize this opportunity of bearing testimony to the warm affection he bore to the ancient Italian Church in the Waldensian Valleys; to the hearty and efficient manner in which he advocated its interests both in Scotland and England, and was about to do so in America when death cut him off. During his last illness, fervent prayer was offered on his behalf in every parish in the Waldensian Valleys, and his death was mourned as that of a well-loved friend. His memory will long be cherished among them, along with those of Gilly and Beckwith, as their generous benefactor."

Dr. Guthrie visited these Valleys of the Cottian Alps two different years. Writing home in May, 1865, he thus referred to the tragic events of which they had been the theatre:—

"This land of most beautiful and sublime scenery has associations and memories surpassing in moral grandeur those, perhaps, of any country on earth, save the Holy Land. Here, for long centuries, when darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, when the whole world was like the land of Egypt during the plague of darkness, these Valleys were a Goshen. Other Churches, the best of them, have come out of the *Cloaca Maxima*, the great sewer of Rome: the Vaudois Church, never.

"In these respects, there is no Church in Christendom but should give place to this, the smallest and poorest of all the Churches. No Church has ever suffered for the truth or



maintained it as this has done. With breathing-times, the Waldenses were persecuted, often to the death, for nearly four hundred years. Their sufferings began long years before those of our Covenanters, and only saw their end, leaving them in the enjoyment of peace and liberty, a few years ago. Nothing but the hand of a special Providence could have kept the light burning here, or prevented it from being quenched in the blood of those who, rather than consent to become Papists, fought battles with unparalleled bravery. I have got out of the La Tour College Library an old account, by Leger, of their Church and its sufferings, and of scenes he saw with his own eyes and heard from undoubted witnesses; and, as I went through the narrative, my blood boiled, and I prayed God to hasten the time of the downfall of Babylon. The book is now rare. The best idea I can give you of the harrowing character of its details is to mention that the Vaudois, a meek and patient race, are not in the habit of putting it into the hands of their children while young, for this reason—viz., that their children, as they believe, could hardly read that narrative without having revengeful feelings roused within them against the Roman Catholics, and they wish their children to hate none, but live in love with all men. Well, I don't agree in the soundness of this view; nor did our forefathers, who highly esteemed the 'Cloud of Witnesses,' and such books, giving them a wide circulation. Only, I don't wonder at some so dealing with Leger's book and its dreadful prints of the cruelties inflicted on the Vaudois.

"From the rocks, which I have but to lift my eyes from this paper to see, they tossed men and women,—having first stripped them and tied their heads and heels together,—that they might go rolling bounding down, to lie at the bottom a crushed, bloody, quivering mass. Two days ago, I saw the spot on the hills where mothers fled from these ruffians, carrying the cradles with their infants on their heads, while their husbands and brothers did their best and bravest to keep the bloodhounds at bay, till the women and children had escaped to the shelter of the rocks, and the less dreaded rigours of a winter night, passed without other shelter than a cliff or cavern could offer; when next morning came, the cold winter dawn showed eighty infants lying frozen to death in their mothers' arms; many of the poor mothers dead themselves. Thousands fell in battle; thousands died in prison; and this system of persecution was carried on for centuries. But the bloody perseverance of the persecutors was met by a magnanimous and almost superhuman perseverance on the part of the persecuted; and at length God raised them up friends and



champions to protect them. Among these, greatest of all, stood Oliver Cromwell, who sent word to the Duke of Savoy that, unless he would cease persecuting the Lord's saints, he would send a fleet over the very Alps to defend them and punish him!

"Till a few years ago, they had no liberty to meet openly as a Church. When permission was at length granted them by the father of the present King, a short while before his abdication, to hold a Synod, a representative—of course a Popish one—of the Government must be there to watch over their proceedings, and see that they did nothing against the Church of Rome, the established religion of the country. That is now all passed away; and on Tuesday last the Vaudois Church met in synod at St. Jean, a country church about two miles from La Tour, as free as any of our three great Presbyterian denominations in Edinburgh in this month of May."

Dr. Guthrie and his eldest son were present as deputies from the Free Church of Scotland. That visit opened up to him a new source of interest for the remaining years of his life. He fell quite in love with the Waldenses, their valleys, their Church, and its mission work in Italy. Here is his own description of his first impressions of the locality—

"HÔTEL DE L'OURS, TORRE (or LA TOUR), PIEDMONT,  
"ITALY, *May 9th*, 1866.

"What a change a few days, and a few hundred miles, have made on our position! A short while ago we were on the broad, level, lovely bay of Naples; here, I lift my eye from the table where I write to a beautiful hill, clothed in the softest, richest green that vines, walnut and chestnut trees, can lend; these rise to its rocky summit, fifteen hundred feet, like a pyramid of foliage, above and opposite to the hotel; while high, but close above, is the cloud-capped peak of a mountain, out of whose mists I see broad patches and long streaks of snow descending its gorges and ravines. At whatever hour of the night I got out of bed and looked, at Naples, I heard the rumble and rapid driving of these Jehuities—'The driving is



like the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimshi, for he driveth furiously.' Here, about two o'clock this morning, I drew aside the window-curtain, and looked out at the open window—we always sleep with our windows open—and could have lingered there till daybreak. No footfall broke the quiet of the streets; this 'hill city' was sleeping in the bosom of the mountains; the snow aloft was shining in softened moonlight; a gentle murmur, like a lullaby, came up from the river; and down from the vine-clad hill, with its walnut and chestnut-trees, came the voices of nightingales, most soft, sweet, and melodious."

"May 12th, 1865."

"I like above almost any other place to go to the markets, as there you see the peasantry; not perhaps in their 'best and braws,' but washed and neat, and in attire which does their faces and forms some justice; you see, moreover, the produce and staple commodities of the country.

"We have spent an hour in the weekly market this morning. I bought a pair of spectacles; your mother bought needles and a fan from market-stands on the street. The vendors of these articles could speak only the *patois* of the valleys. It is not French, it is not Italian, though more Italian than French, and is a sort of *débris* of the old Latin tongue. On going to pay, we came to a standstill; the humble merchants we were dealing with did not comprehend our French. No sooner was the dead-lock reached, than it was opened by men, women, and boys, who knew both French and *patois*, stepping forward unbidden, to interpret; instead of, as some at home would have done, hanging back from sheepishness and want of the kindly frankness which we meet here among these lovable people,—or *glowering* and *guffawing* at both parties. Almost nobody in this whole country is ever seen idle, with the exception of the *daft* folk, an idle chap of a shoemaker who spends more time dandling his bairn on the street than at his *last*, and an old Popish woman, who lives opposite our hotel, and, like me, gets up at five o'clock in the morning, and, like me also, spends a good deal of her time lying over the window. We look over to each other; and this old body, with her grey hairs, toothless gums, and gold cross, and I keep each other in countenance."

In La Tour, the little capital of their Valleys, the Waldenses are mingled with foreign elements, and D-



Guthrie was desirous to see them more nearly in their pure, primitive condition. For this purpose, he made an expedition to Massel, one of the remotest of the parishes, in the Val San Martino, a wild and thoroughly Alpine region. A special interest attaches to the locality, for it was there that Henri Arnaud, through the dreary winter of 1689, defended the famous Balsille against the troops of the Duke of Savoy.

"Along our road the meadows and rocks were an endless source of interest and delight. The narcissus, our single white odorous lily, grew in beautiful profusion among the grass of the meadows. No one plants like God! Set by His hand in these meadows, where few or none of its leaves are seen, these lilies looked much more graceful than in our gardens—they formed bunches and broad patches of beautiful white, showing their golden hearts and perfuming the air. A lovely primula, with a head of many purple, sometimes white, flowers, studded the banks; columbines grew in abundance; and a bright saponaria, like that which adorns our parterres, peeped out of a hundred crevices, clothing the rocks with its beautiful pink flowers; then, the place of heather was taken by lavender which covers the hills here, as heath does ours. We were delighted to meet some old acquaintances, and ready to sing, on discovering beds of blueberries on Piedmontese hills and under Italian skies, 'Should auld acquaintance be forgot?' I noticed, too, the asphodel and gentian, the latter of a most lovely blue, and the wild cherry, adding much to the beauty of scenes which, more than any we had seen, afforded us a perpetual delight, and raised our thoughts to Him whose praises seemed to be ever sounded amid these sublime solitudes by the voices of their many waters. Compared with these old temples of God's saints, where their psalms echoed amid the rocks, startling the eagle in her eyrie and the fox on the hill, we exclaimed, 'What is St. Peter's? how paltry its dome! how poor its bits of marbles!'

"The sun was about to set; we had turned one of the most formidable corners we had had to face, happily not to *force*; our path, not broader than a mule needs for its feet, turned sharp round the edge of the rock, along the face of which,



smooth and naked as a skin, it was cut a hundred feet or more above the torrent over which we hung, when we hailed the lonely hamlet of Massel. Its cabins were clustered on the steep slope across the gorge, wooded rocks overhanging them, while above the rocks rose long reaches of snow, that seemed to flow out from the clouds that rested on the tops of these Alpine mountains. Though we were at a height of six thousand feet, the hills close by rose at least three thousand feet higher still.

" . . . . As if the sun had broken out through the mists which had by this time come creeping down into the upper valleys, such was the welcome we got at the minister's house. Though like its neighbour's, with a rude wooden balcony, and external appearance not much different from theirs, inside we found many unexpected comforts: a most kind and frank welcome; a genuine lady in the minister's wife; in him, an able man, a devoted pastor, an eloquent preacher; in their eldest child, one of the brightest boys of three years old I ever saw; and a bit-sweet lassie, of nine months, in her mother's arms. Their hospitality and kindness might be equalled—surpassed they could not be—and so long as we live, Pasteur and Madame Cardon \* will have a warm corner in our hearts.

\* \* \* \* \*

" The church of Massel stands on the opposite side of the valley from the hamlet; and we were away to it betimes on Sunday morning. George Robson † and David walked across; your mother and I mounted our mules again, and so climbed up to the plateau on which, in immediate proximity to the Popish Chapel, it stands. The Papists don't number more than two hundred in this parish; the Protestants, or Waldenses rather, some fifteen or sixteen hundred. As we got up to the church, we heard a clear young voice inside, reading the Scriptures. On entering, we found the house well filled; the women sitting on one side, the men on the other; and in front of the pulpit, a boy, who stood up before a table on which stood a large Ostervald Bible, like that I used at Arbirlot, reading the Word of God to the congregation. On closing the chapter he did not close the book; but, making his young pipe ring over all the church, read Ostervald's commentary on the chapter. On inquiring into the meaning of this strange but striking practice, I learned that this duty of reading the Scriptures while the congregation were

\* Now of Pignerol.

† Now Rev. G. Robson, of the U. P. Church, Inverness.



assembling, belonged to the *regent*, as he is called,—the *dominis* or teacher; but that he sometimes, as on this occasion, employed some boy who was a good reader, as his substitute. It is a capital custom this! Something like it (psalm-singing, I think) was once the custom in Scotland. The sooner it is revived the better—instead of having people *glowering* about them till the minister appears, and thereby unfitting their minds and hearts for the service of His house.

“On the inner walls of the church two or three passages of Scripture were painted. On that in front of the pulpit were the device and motto of the Church of the Valleys:—a candle burning and set in a candlestick, seven stars shining around. The motto, ‘*Lux lucet in tenebris*’—the light shineth in the darkness—how appropriate to a Church, that, holding the truth from the days of the apostles, enjoyed the pure light of evangelical doctrine for long centuries, during which, till the Reformation, ‘darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people!’ In the centre of the ceiling was a dove in fresco painting—an emblem of the Holy Spirit, which seemed to be descending in beams of light on the congregation. The congregation sit at psalm-singing, and stand at prayer. They have a liturgy; most of the prayers being read. They read the Creed also, and the Ten Commandments. During the reading of the Commandments, the whole congregation stand up to hear God’s Law: a very impressive spectacle and right thing it is. I would like to see the practice introduced among us. The minister, who preached in French—in which language, indeed, all the services were conducted—spoke with power, and fervour, and great beauty. No reading of sermons in these churches! The Bible, liturgy, and hymn-book lie on a book-board close by the wall; so that when the minister faces the people, he has nothing before him—no board broad enough for a manuscript to lie on.

“In some of their churches they have organs; but, notwithstanding these and their liturgy, they are as staunch Presbyterians as we are. It is hard to say whether most nonsense is talked by the advocates or by the opponents of instrumental music in the worship of God. I agree with the Pope, who has neither fiddle, nor organ, nor French horn, nor bagpipes, nor anything but vocal music in his own chapel; but to denounce the organ as unpresbyterian is sheer nonsense, since the number of Presbyterian churches which use it is many more than those who do not. While the Waldensians have a liturgy, they have likewise free prayer; and some such midway practice between that followed by the Presbyterian and Episcopalian



Churches of our country I would consider the perfection of a system—namely, one thoroughly devotional prayer read by the minister, and responded to, as in the Church of England, by the people, and the other prayers free as in Presbyterian churches; the minister being thereby afforded an opportunity of suiting his supplications to the subject of his discourse, to the circumstances of his people, and to the condition of the country, the Church, and the world. One entire Liturgical service, and only one, to be closely repeated day after day, is not good. Our minds, as well as our bodies, crave variety. . . .

“I formed a better idea of the sufferings which the Vaudois endured when I learned the dreadful rigours of winter amid valleys which we saw robed in flowers. In winter, the minister of Massel goes on his visits with clamps that fit to his shoes; these are armed with iron spikes, each an inch in length, to save him from slipping away down into destruction, when crossing the sloping roads and rocks sheathed in ice. But the most extraordinary thing remains to be told; this, namely, that more than one-half of the families in this Alpine parish during winter leave their ordinary apartments, and for five months eat, work, and sleep in the ground story where the cows are kept. In winter they live in the *byre* for the sake of warmth—of the heat which the cows give out! This arrangement was so astonishing, that I could not be satisfied till I saw with my own eyes how it was managed. So I got M. Cardon, who accompanied us to the Balsille, to ask one of the peasant proprietors of that hamlet to allow us to enter his house. The honest man and his frank wife seemed more amused with our curiosity than offended with our inquisitiveness, or ashamed of their condition. So the man opened a low door, and, mounting a ladder, vanished in the darkness, bidding me follow. Stooping to the lintel, and groping my way, I mounted, and found myself in a small room with a mere glimmer of light, by which I saw two or three presses—called by the Scotch *aumeries* (a term derived from *armoire*, the French word for a press-cupboard)—and a low rude bedstead. We next paid a visit to the winter apartment on the ground floor, where we found two cows and a calf. The calf seemed very glad to see me; grateful for a visit that broke in on the monotony of its constant in-door and not very bright life (for the place had no visible window), it began to lick my hands. I saw the bedstead in a corner of the byre, where, in company with their cows, these poor people, working by the light of a lamp, which they feed with oil extracted from the walnut, pass the long dreary winter months.



"It is a wretched way of doing. But the most wonderful thing of all remains to be told. In that house,—where the food is chiefly potatoes, rye, and buckwheat, and not much of these, and where the time of the family is so occupied in tilling their bits of land to make them yield food sufficient for themselves and cattle, that they have not leisure to cut down wood enough to defy the rigours of winter in their upper room, and save them the necessity of herding with the beasts,—we found, great and small together, thirty volumes; and among these (the issue of a French Evangelical Society) some of Spurgeon's sermons and Ryle's tracts, translated into French! Nor is that all. I found boys in these remote mountain hamlets who were learning Greek and Latin. They travel every Monday morning a distance of some twelve miles or more to a capital school in Pomaret, at the mouth of the valley of San Martino, returning to their homes on Saturday night. It was a sad thing to see many of the houses without a bit of glass in the windows; but, on the other hand, gratifying to see that the paper which supplied its place, and which was commonly oiled to give it a measure of transparency, was a leaf of a writing copy, the handiwork of the *bairns* at school."

On Dr. Guthrie's return to Scotland, he was full of enthusiasm for the Waldenses. Wherever he went, he sought to infuse into others a share of his interest and admiration, losing no opportunity of speaking in private and in public on their behalf. Thus we find him writing from Inveraray Castle, where Mrs. Guthrie and he were visiting in September, 1865—

"What stores of knowledge come out of the Dean (of St. Paul's) and Mr. Gladstone! Both are brilliant, or, I would rather say, Mr. Gladstone is brilliant, and Dean Milman witty. We discuss everything, religion, ecclesiastics, literature, morals, Churches. For example, to-day at luncheon our topic was in the main the Greek Church. Yesterday at dinner, we had the Waldenses. I learned from the Dean (who seems to know everything) that one of the librarians at Oxford was poking among the old collections of some college there, when he lighted on the long-lost books and records which



Sir S. Morland, Cromwell's ambassador, brought over to this country, and over the loss of which the Waldenses have been mourning for two hundred years. He is to send me an account of the discovery, which I will send to the Valleys."

The Waldensian is probably the only Church in Christendom whose agents in the mission field outnumber her ministers at home. The mission field in this case is Italy, where (with only fifteen home parishes) there are now above sixty stations, dotted over the whole Peninsula from Turin to Sicily, in which island six organized places of worship exist.

Dr. Guthrie was one of the founders of the Waldensian Aid Society, and, from 1868 to 1872, spoke on its behalf in Edinburgh, London, and many lesser towns. His excellent friend, the late Dr. Revel, President of the Waldensian College at Florence, and latterly Signor Prochet, of Genoa, came once and again from Italy to accompany him on these tours; and, very largely through his exertions and appeals, the Committee have raised some thousands of pounds annually for helping the Waldensian work of Evangelization in Italy.

An experienced and successful beggar, his success in this field proved that he had not forgotten the art in his later years. His audiences were frequently convened at drawing-room meetings; one being held in Stafford House, in 1868, on which occasion the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland invited a large party to hear him. Of another occasion he thus wrote—



"LONDON, 39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, KENSINGTON,  
"March 14th, 1868.

"We reached Willis's Rooms about half-past seven. Cards had been issued bearing that the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, Mr. Matheson, and Dr. Chalmers invited — to hear Dr. Revel and Dr. Guthrie. We arrived early, but a long string of carriages were rattling up to the door, and a stream of ladies and gentlemen in evening dress setting steadily in. On entering, we found ourselves in a magnificent hall, of imposing height, lighted by splendid chandeliers, and seated luxuriously.

"Mr. Kinnaird introduced the subject briefly, but remarkably well, closing by calling on Mr. Goodheart, of the Established Church, to pray, which he did in very devout tones and admirably selected words. . . . I got up on the table. I was a little afraid of it, as I had never spoken from a table before, and there was not hardly any room for locomotion; I felt as if I were an auctioneer! However, all that was soon forgot in the scene before me, and the interested faces of my hearers. They tell me it was 'one of the finest gatherings ever seen in the Rooms; that we had the cream of London—very thick and sweet cream it was. We had a sufficient proportion of men to take away all feeling of dull decorum by their cheers and applause, and I can say, for the good and grand ladies of the metropolis, that when I told them some few funny things, they laughed as heartily as any set of ploughmen or weavers I ever addressed; not that I intended so to pepper my speech, but they came up, and were not thrown away.

"An hour, or as much more as I chose, was required of me at our preliminary meeting the day before; I think I spoke for an hour and twenty minutes, closing with a peroration against the endowment or encouragement of Popery by the nation in any shape or form.

"P.S.—We have drawing-room meetings for the Waldenses on the 18th, 19th, 20th, 28rd, 25th, and 26th."

The very last address Dr. Guthrie ever made (if we except a short speech and sermon at Lochlee) was in London, in May, 1872, when he pleaded the same cause in Mr. D. Matheson's house at 52, Queen's Gate, London. To the end of his life the cause of Italian Evangelization lay very near his heart. He had seen the first



fruits of what he believed would one day become a great harvest; and few spectacles abroad or at home interested him so much as that which he describes in the following letter:—

“VENICE. Sunday, May 16th, 1870.

“We have just returned from Comba's Church. It was full to the door. We were conducted to it by a *mite* of a creature whom Comba sent to our hotel for the purpose; and it would have amused you to see ‘six feet two and a half inches without the shoes,’ with his train, following this emmet of a creature dressed up like a man, with a skin brown as a berry, and hair black as mirk midnight. We marched right up to the top of the hall, as I wished to be where I could, while seeing and hearing Comba, have, at the same time, a good view of the audience. I followed him more or less—losing him now, and catching him again, once more to lose him. Comba is a model of a preacher—a grand build of a man, with a very expressive, animated face, a large head, with dark flowing hair, and moustache and beard of corresponding hue. His oratory is vigorous, full, indeed, of fire, without being extravagant or at all *outré*.

“Miss Agnes Watson was the only one of us who (as one might say) ‘made meat’ of the discourse. But it was a grand sermon to me to look on the people. Three years ago, they were worshipping a woman—kneeling to stocks and stones; and there now were they by hundreds, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right mind. A more intelligent-looking audience, not to say merely attentive, I never saw. More than once I saw the tear shining in the eyes both of men and women as they sat hanging on the preacher's lips.

“Thus we have seen the best and greatest sight that has met our eyes in Italy: not man's work, which shall perish with himself, but the imperishable work of the Spirit of the Great and Living God. St. Peter's, with all its proud show and costly splendours—the temples of Pæstum, standing up in lonely grandeur, by the shores of the Mediterranean and under the shadow of the Apennines after the lapse of nearly three thousand years—what are these, to the three or four hundred converts from Popery we saw to-day, whom God has brought out of the deep pit and mury clay, the living stones of an Eternal Temple to his own praise and glory? How poor the boasted triumphs of painters' or sculptors' art, their Venus de Medicis, Apollo Belvedere, their Raphaels, Titians, Tintoretos, Caraccis,—to these triumphs of Truth and Divine Grace!”



## CHAPTER XIV.

### EVENING OF LIFE.

"THIS day sixty-three years ago, I was born," wrote Dr. Guthrie, on 12th July, 1866, "and in God's good Providence have attained to more than the years of my father. I cannot, however, use Jacob's expression, 'the years of my *fathers*,'—my grandfather having reached eighty-seven, and his father a still greater age.

"How full of mercies have these sixty-three years been! May the years or days that are to come be better, holier! What a miserable thing would the consciousness of passing time be, but that Christ hath brought life and immortality to light! Some families observe the birthdays of each of their members by grand dinners or grand *tea feasts*. I was brought up with no such indulgences. If birthdays are to be observed at all, a religious use is the best that can be made of them; to use them as a height, from which solemnly to look back on the past, and forward to the future." (*To Mr. J. R. Dymock.*)

He felt, at that date, that the evening of his life had already commenced. In 1863 he had been unable to



fulfil an engagement in London which he had made with Dr. James Hamilton, and thus wrote:—"I must give up all extra or foreign work till the end of next summer at least. I have bidden farewell to the platform. Even here, meanwhile, I have been obliged to give up the use of my legs, and drive about the streets.\* The truth is, I am become, or am rapidly becoming, an old man; though my general health is good, and when I play the part of a gentleman, get on well. I am hereafter to curtail the length of my work in St. John's. You will believe me that I have written this letter with a reluctant hand. . . . *Ca' canny*, yourself."

Dr. Guthrie was not at that time sixty. But thirty years of excitement and hard work were telling on him now. In 1863, his duties were discharged with more effort than ever before: in October of that year he wrote,—“I have arrived slowly at the opinion that I must get out of harness. More than any supposed or knew, but those within the walls of my own house, my work has been, for years gone by, a toil to me, and one which has been getting heavier each year. The high spirits and steam-power with which I am constitution-

\* He had now begun to use a phaeton, and said he felt thankful for it as a means of saving his strength. Fourteen years previously, in 1849, he had jocularly adverted to the possibility of some day keeping a carriage. “I received notice the other day,” he wrote to a friend, “that I had neglected to send in a return about hair-powder, armorial bearings, and horses. You know that though I am grey and getting bald, I wear no hair-powder—my head is getting white without the help of government. As to armorial bearings, when I am rich enough to set up my carriage, no saying what I will do; but meanwhile my only ‘bearings’ are a stick and a horse, and they might as well charge me for employing Dr. Fairbairn!”



ally blessed bore me through so long as I was on the road, and in the eye of the public; but now I am forced to call a halt. My heart has got bad again. It is working irregularly, and cannot but suffer from such a trial as holding forth in a heated, crowded church like St. John's, for an hour's excitable preaching. It must thump on at a terrible rate,—which don't suit a damaged engine."

Still, he was most reluctant to say farewell to his pulpit and his people. To try, therefore, whether complete rest and seclusion might not do for him again what they had been blessed to accomplish in 1848, he left Edinburgh in the middle of the following winter, and writes from New Brighton, Cheshire:—

"January 5th, 1864.

"To be egotistical and speak of myself, you will have heard that, through God's good hand on me, I am improved and improving. No doubt I am obliged to be careful; some back-throws having warned me that I am a sort of *cracked teapot*, which is fully as fit for the mantelpiece as for rough daily use. Still, my hopes of being able to resume my place in St. John's are much brighter than they were when I left Edinburgh. I would be very happy to be back again; but I desire to be patient, saying, 'Good is the will of the Lord.'

" . . . . We have no Presbyterians here, but drink time about at three good *wells*—the Episcopalian, Congregational, and Methodist Churches. The people are blessed with the Gospel, and devoted, zealous ministers." (*To Mrs. W. Reid.*)

On his return, his medical advisers, Dr. Begbie, Professor Miller, and Professor Simpson, pronounced it a necessity that he should at once withdraw from all public work. Dr. Begbie, indeed, who was a member of his congregation, told him that such was the state



of his heart's action, that the wonder to him was, he had not seen him drop down in the pulpit. The path of duty was now plain; and Dr. Guthrie penned and published a letter to his flock, of which we append some extracts:—

“TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION OF FREE  
ST. JOHN'S.

“MY DEAR FRIENDS,—It is due to you, that I myself should inform you that I am called to withdraw from the active duties of the ministry. A predecessor of mine in my first charge at Arbirlot, dropped dead at the Lord's table, with the words of Communion on his lips, and its bread in his hand; and, falling on the field, rose to receive the Crown, if I may say so, with his armour on.\* I had hoped also to die in, and not out of, harness; preaching on to the end of life, though with faltering tongue. But God, who knows best, has determined otherwise; and I desire to bow my head, saying, ‘Good is the will of the Lord. Father, not my will, but thine be done!’ My Heavenly Master can do without me; and, instead of repining or fretting under this trial, I feel that I have cause to be thankful that He ever honoured me in putting me in trust with the ministry, and that, notwithstanding my great unworthiness and many imperfections, He has so long spared me as an ambassador for Christ, to ‘pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.’ . . . . . I have to sing of mercy as well as judgment—the burden

\* See Vol. I., page 315.



might have been much heavier ; and it lightens it greatly to know that, during the few years that may possibly remain, I need not lead a useless life ; although, indeed, I think no man passes a useless life who, at God's bidding, stands still, the patient and tranquil spectator of a stage on which he was once an actor. The physicians who have put a seal on my lips have not tied up my hands ; and thus left free to do what I can with my pen to serve our blessed Master and the best interests of mankind, I hope, when the last summons comes, it will find me working as well as watching.

“He who has shut one door of usefulness, has opened another ; and I think it right frankly to explain to you one among many reasons why I regard this as a matter of great thankfulness. It is not only because I will be able still, with God's blessing, to do some good in the world, instead of lying like a worn-out, dismasted ship, beached on the shore ; but that, like Paul, who earned his bread as a tent-maker that the ministry might not be blamed, I will, so long as my brain and hand can work, be burdensome to none. Not but that I think that the minister who spends his health and strength in the public service has as good a right to a retiring allowance as the officer to a pension who has left his sword-arm in a battle-field, and walks the streets with an empty sleeve.

“In regard to my pulpit and public office, I have heard the words, ‘Thou shalt be no longer steward ;’ and though there is a pause between these and what follows, the time, the solemn time, cannot be far distant, when



the same voice shall be heard again, saying, 'Give an account of thy stewardship.' In view of that account, I have no resource but to cast myself on God's forgiveness and great mercy. My hope is in the Saviour whom I have endeavoured to preach; I would otherwise tremble at the sword which now hangs above my head, ready at any moment to fall and sever the thread of life. I commend you all very affectionately to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. And now and finally, brethren, farewell. Farewell to you, farewell to my pulpit: I preach no more. The voice is in my ear which says, 'Go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.'

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

"EDINBURGH, *May 17th*, 1864."

When this letter appeared in the public prints, it awakened throughout the community feelings of affection and regret.

"I have already," he wrote to his son Alexander, "received kind and sympathizing letters; the first of them that came to hand being from Dean Ramsay, who has always borne himself in a very kind and, indeed, affectionate way to me. This trial which is laid upon me I hope will be sanctified not only to myself, but to you and all who are mine. We are at all times so uncertain of life, that there is but a step between us and death; but that is especially true of such as are attacked with a malady like mine. Any violent excitement or great sorrow, any strong mental emotion, might produce, by its effect on the heart, a sudden end of life. And I am sure this will be felt by you and all the other members of my family an additional reason for so bearing yourselves that you



may never be a cause of grief to me, but a joy and comfort. Not that I would have regard to me to be your highest spring of action :—your heavenly Father, the God and Giver of our Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus himself, has done for you what neither I nor any earthly father could have done.

“ I am very thankful to God for the comfort I have had in all my children, so far as they have yet gone. They are much on my mind, as well when I am working as when I am praying, when I am abroad as when I am at home, when they are with as well as away from me. There is nothing I dread so much as evil companionship.”

Dr. Guthrie was permitted to maintain a connection with his congregation as *pastor emeritus*. He was thus nominally one of the ministers of St. John's Free Church till the close of life ; and while he no longer received any allowance from the congregational funds, this arrangement enabled him to draw his dividend from the General Sustentation Fund of the Free Church, as well as to retain his seat as a member of the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh. Before finally passing from the subject of his connection with his congregation, it is right to mention that a misunderstanding shortly after this date unhappily arose between himself and certain members of the Kirk Session ; one painful consequence of which was that his relations with his colleague, Dr. Hanna, became for a time less cordial than they had been. It is not needful here to enter into any detail, further than to add that, after the whole matter had been remitted for judgment to a committee of the Presbytery, of which Dr. Rainy was convener, and after the deliverance given by that committee had been acquiesced in by both parties, the brotherly intercourse between Dr. Hanna



and Dr. Guthrie was at once resumed, the first step towards which was taken by the latter, who wrote the following lines:—

"1, SALISBURY ROAD, December 27th, 1865.

"MY DEAR DR. HANNA,—The deliverance given in this day to the Presbytery removes the barrier which, for a short but very painful period, interrupted our long and happy intercourse. I am very grateful to God for this. I am very thankful that we have both been spared to see this done—a consummation so devoutly to be wished for. Had it in Providence happened otherwise, I believe it would have been to the survivor, whether you or me, a sorrow long as our remaining life.

"I propose to call on you to-morrow at ten o'clock—not that we may discuss nor even touch on the past, but, burying it in oblivion, resume our intercourse as of old. May this trial be sanctified to us both. It has been to me, and I have no doubt to you likewise, a source of much pain. But good, I trust, will come out of this evil, though it were in no other way than this—our showing the world that differences between Christian men are not deadly, and that they who preach bearing and forbearing, the duty of forgiving and asking forgiveness, are able, through divine grace, as they preach, to practise.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

In his farewell letter to his flock, as the reader will have observed, Dr. Guthrie alluded to the prospect of usefulness in God's service by means of his pen. This allusion had special reference to his having accepted, shortly before that date, a proposal made to him by an enterprising London publisher (Mr. A. Strahan), that he should become editor of a religious periodical of the first class, for which it was believed there was then an opening,—to be entitled the *Sunday Magazine*. Such a position was wholly novel to Dr. Guthrie, and at first he hesitated about accepting



it; but encouraged by the assurance that he would be aided by a staff of eminent writers of various Evangelical denominations, above all, by his friend, the Rev. W. G. Blaikie, D.D., as assistant-editor, he consented.

He had already contributed occasionally to religious periodicals, both Scotch and English. The following characteristic note from the editor of *Good Words*, Dr. Norman Macleod, refers to his connection with that popular monthly:—

“Now, dear Doctor, don't say nay! I know I am a horrid bore. I feel sneaking, like a genteel beggar. But I will give you twenty million thanks (that is, I will give you my heart *wholesale*, which is more than many thousand thanks in retail) if you give me four pages, each page a Sabbath-evening reading, on any texts you please.

“Unless I get Stanley, Alford, Whately, &c., to take a share in this work, I won't yoke you with small men. I wish twelve men to furnish me with twelve months' Sabbath readings, such as men with *head* and heart will like.

“So, when my list is complete, if you don't like your coadjutors, you can withdraw. Now, Doctor, mind, you have never yet given me a lift in any of my undertakings, and I have never been unwilling to give a hitch to even the Free Kirk when I could! *Four pages!* to be read by forty thousand readers! Is not that little seed and a great crop?

“Don't abuse me; I am an editor; that is worse than a ragged boy far!

“Yours in love and hope (or, as Falstaff says, ‘Yea or nay, as thou usest me!’),

“N. MACLEOD.”

His own feelings on becoming editor of the *Sunday Magazine* he thus expressed in a letter to his eldest son—

“LONDON, February 16th, 1864.

“If it had pleased God, I should have much preferred to live and die in the office of a preacher. His is the noblest of all offices. However, I must try and work by the far less agreeable, and, in some respects, less efficient, instrumentality.



of the pen ; and that, I may say, is now arranged. If God is pleased to smile on this scheme, I will be occupying a position of importance and influence. I will be still in *harness*, only of a lighter kind, and suited to my physical condition ; and have the pleasure of rising in the morning to my day's known work, light but fixed—a very different and much happier condition than his who gets up of a morning and does not know what he is to do, or what he should do.

“ I cannot be too thankful that, in God's good providence, I have such a pleasant prospect before me—a suitable sphere of usefulness in the evening of my day. All this may be soon overcast and clouded. But that is in God's hands. I must close ; only saying that we were at Spurgeon's last Sunday evening—a first-rate, plain sermon, and most magnificent sight. When at Stafford House yesterday, I told the *grandees* they ought to go to Spurgeon's occasionally—that he was a mighty power for good in London.”

Writing to another of his sons a few days thereafter, he adds—

“ Let all the family thank God most gratefully for His many great mercies to me, and may you all be enabled to praise Him by lives conformed to His law and devoted to His service. One great object which I promise myself in leaving the pulpit and entering on this new and less exciting work is, that, in God's good providence, my life may thereby be prolonged to see you and Charlie and Tom settled in life, and that I may be the means of leading you all to Jesus. This is my greatest desire, that you may be Christ's, early giving yourself to Him.

“ I commend you to the care of a Father who will be always near you.

“ Your very affectionate father,

“ THOMAS GUTHRIE.”

His position as editor of the *Sunday Magazine* was by no means free from its difficulties and drawbacks. “ I am flooded,” he writes shortly after entering on his work, “ with letters from England, Scotland, and Ireland, with offers of contributions from male and female volunteers.” He found it hard to say nay ; and it was not easy, in-



deed impossible, in regard to the matter selected for the Magazine, to please everybody. He was not, indeed, always pleased himself; and it is just to his memory to explain that articles did occasionally appear which fell below his standard—not that they were defective in literary execution, but that he desiderated matter more entirely in accord with the title and objects of the Magazine. Still, he had much happiness in his new position; and, as one source of his interest in the Ragged School was the intercourse he enjoyed on its Committee with men of other Churches, so the thoroughly unsectarian character of the *Sunday Magazine* gratified him, as did the friendship of many gifted men and women, his *collaborateurs* on its staff.

Ere the periodical had been a year in existence, Dr. Guthrie wrote:—"My time is very much occupied with correspondence connected with the *Sunday Magazine*, and preparing materials from my pen for each monthly number. Its success hitherto has been great, if not unprecedented. Strahan, from whom I had a letter the other day, calculates on a steady circulation for the first year of ninety thousand monthly copies; that is, independent of the weekly issues."

In discharging his duties as editor, he sometimes overtaxed his strength; he was not satisfied if unable to take a fair share of the contents;\* and the very last

\* He was at the same time very sensible of the consideration which he invariably received at the hands of the proprietors of the Magazine. During the earlier years of its existence, Mr. Strahan did much to lighten his work.



literary exertion he made was when, within ten days of his death, he sat up in bed to correct proofs for the "Leper's Lesson,"\* at St. Leonard's-on-Sea.

Besides continuous articles of a more directly devotional kind, and afterwards published under the titles of "Man and the Gospel" (1865); "The Angel's Song" (1865); "The Parables" (1866); "Our Father's Business" (1867); "Out of Harness" (1867); "Early Piety" (1868); "Studies of Character" (1868 and 1870); "Sundays Abroad" (1871),—he had commenced what he designed to be a series of papers on the Charities of London,† a subject thoroughly congenial to him. Thus he wrote from the house of one of his sons-in-law:—"Copley, Neston, Cheshire, 17th October, 1871. My dear Mr. Maitland,—You may be sure your cripples will be limping over the pages of the *Sunday Magazine*: first, because this institution, with kindred ones, deserves a place in the London charities; and secondly, because

\* *Sunday Magazine* for 1873, page 577.

† So admirable did the directors of the great Institution for Incurables at Putney regard the description which he gave of the Home there, that they begged his permission to republish the article separately, and gave him a right of five votes for election of applicants to the Institution.

But he was very diffident about attempting articles of this more general kind: and in reference to the first paper of that description which he had prepared he thus wrote to his eldest son:—"Along with my MS., I sent a letter to Strahan telling him that this was quite a new field to me, and that it might be I was too old to begin; therefore I asked him, as I did not wish in my old age to make a fool of myself, and have people saying of me as of others, '*There is nae fule like an auld fule*,' to look over the MS. and say most frankly, if he thought so, 'that it would not do.' I told him that I could afford to have it sent among the 'rejected addresses' and would not be mortified. I would just, in that case, like a wise author, 'stick to my last.'"



Mrs. Maitland and you are so much interested in its welfare and success." (*To Mr. J. Fuller Maitland,*)

Shut out now from his pulpit, an opportunity was afforded him month by month of addressing, from the editor's desk, an audience a hundred times as large as when, in the days of his vigour, he preached in St. John's. In a letter written after crossing the Channel in 1870, he described the company on board, and added:—" 'Look at that man,' I said to your mother, directing her attention to a tall, stout, muscular, intelligent-looking man who sat opposite to us on the deck, with a respectable-like woman, who had a child with her. 'I'll warrant,' I said, 'that is a Scotch engineer who has been in foreign service.' And sure enough our friend steps up to me by-and-by, to say, 'Are you Dr. Guthrie?' 'And who are you,' said I, 'friend?' He was an engineer, a Berwick-on-Tweed man, who had been years in Russia, and, though living at St. Petersburg, was a regular reader of the *Sunday Magazine*."

"Give my kindest regards to your father" (the late Dr. Williams of York), he wrote to a friend. "I wish for him, what an old Christian gentleman once told me in simple and beautiful words he was enjoying. After he had been years off the streets (and, as I fancied, in his grave) I was surprised to encounter him one day. I did not let him see my surprise; but contented myself with expressions of pleasure at seeing him, and questions



about his health. These he answered, saying, 'I bless God, I have had a long day, and now I have a quiet evening.'"

The "evening" of Dr. Guthrie's "day" was brightened at its very commencement by the expression, from many quarters, of love and respect which followed the announcement of his withdrawal from active service. Ere long, practical direction was given to that feeling by a proposal to present him with some substantial evidence of public sympathy.

He had himself in previous years taken a leading part in raising testimonials to his eminent comrades, Drs. Cunningham and Candlish, and he rejoiced when the Free Church community set a noble example to other Christian bodies by presenting to these two surviving leaders of her exodus a sum, in the one case of £6,900, and in the other of £5,600. But the testimonial presented to himself differed from these in this,—that it was not so much an expression of value for his services to the Free Church, as to the Church of Christ and the cause of suffering humanity. Alluding to the list of names of those who composed the committee,\* one of the newspapers remarked,—“Probably no other man, certainly no other clergyman, in the three kingdoms could have gathered such an array of friends and admirers, both clerical and lay—‘reverend,’ ‘right reverend,’ and ‘right

\* The Honorary Secretary was the late Mr. Robert Balfour, C.A., a much-loved friend of Dr. Guthrie's, who had been associated with him for years in his Ragged School work. To Mr. Balfour's untiring exertions the success of the testimonial was largely due.



honourable'—around him, vieing with each other to do him honour."

A meeting was held in Edinburgh on 20th February, 1865, when a presentation of plate was made to Mrs. Guthrie, and a cheque for Five Thousand Pounds put into her husband's hands. Shortly before, when through the public prints the intended testimonial had become known to Dr. Guthrie, he thus wrote to Mr. J. R. Dymock from Lochlee:—"Some may fancy that this may blow me up. I have no feelings of the kind, not because I am above the ordinary feelings of our nature, or have not a great deal more corruption than I should have; but such a thing sends a man back to think of his own unworthiness before God, and, if at all right-minded, humbles rather than puffs him up; leading him, when he looks at himself or the many more blessings he enjoys than others not less unworthy and perhaps more deserving, to say, 'What am I?'" In his public expression of thanks, Dr. Guthrie said—

"When forecasting the future,—as a man will do, and should do,—and thinking of the time now come when I might be worn-out with the labours of this city,—whatever my hopes were, they never took the direction of this scene and these circumstances. The most, as my wife knows, that I thought of was, when I was worn-out by city labours, of returning to some country charge to find, in a small flock, work I could overtake, and in the flowers of a manse garden, pleasures which I always enjoyed. But, to retire from the pulpit, the platform, and public life in *this* manner, was little anticipated. . . .

"Some one, I have heard, complained that he never got what he asked. I can honestly and frankly say, whether it was place, or gifts, or honours, I never asked what I have got,—my wife excepted. . . . My wife, who has been a help-



meet to me in every way, who has been a helpmeet to me in all my philanthropic labours as far as her sex and position admitted,—is not accustomed to public speaking (whatever she may be accustomed to in the way of private speaking!), and, therefore, I beg leave to give thanks in her name as well as my own. . . . I do not despise the money; I never did despise money. Many a day have I wished I had a great deal more money, for I would have found a great deal more happiness in doing good to others, if it were not needed in any other way; . . . but, next to the approbation of God, of my blessed Master, and of my own conscience, there is nothing on which I set so high a value as the assurance this testimonial warrants me to entertain, that I have won a place in the hearts of other Christians besides those of my own denomination."

"Did you hear," he wrote shortly after to his eldest son, "that Cassell's House (of London) proposed that I should write a 'Life of Christ,' which they would illustrate by the first artists of the day. I wrote them that I would give a definite answer in some ten days. . . ."

"I am not much inclined to commit myself to Cassell. It is a noble subject, and I would like to finish my public work in such a service; but it will require great care and much time. I feel that I would like to preach more than work with the pen; and I am so much better, that in quiet circumstances I might do something still in that way."

Wide though the sphere of influence was which through the *Sunday Magazine* he enjoyed, he was often inclined to wish that he could, even in his advancing years, quit the editor's desk and return to the pulpit. Occasionally, indeed, he did so; for although, after 1864, he never again preached in St. John's, and but once or twice ventured on a large church, he gladly resumed at intervals his work as an ambassador for Christ.\*

The first service he attempted, after his retirement

\* Two or three times each year, for example, he occupied his son's pulpit at Liberton, near Edinburgh.



from the ministry, was in Rome. Writing from thence to one of his daughters on 10th April, 1865, he says:—  
 “ We had a very interesting day yesterday in the church which is meanwhile in Mr. Lewis’s\* house—his ‘own hired house,’—as Paul spoke of in this very Rome. It was the Communion Sabbath; and I had the great pleasure of having my mouth once more opened, and that anew, for the first time, at Rome,—Paul’s city, and of all cities the most interesting to Christians, Jerusalem only excepted. I gave the closing address at our one ‘table;’—and was none the worse, but felt quite glad to have the ability and the opportunity of speaking for Christ where, with the great apostle at their head, thousands and thousands had laid down their life for Him.”

To another occasional service in interesting circumstances he alludes in the following letter to the Rev. George Caie,† of St. John, New Brunswick:—

“ EDINBURGH, 1, SALISBURY ROAD, *March 5th*, 1866.

“ MY DEAR MR. CAIE,— . . . I am happy to find you have taken up and thrown yourself into the Ragged Cause. Better it had been for many a poor child to have been born in the heart of Africa—barbarous, heathen Africa—than in our own civilised and so-called Christian cities.

“ My wife and I spent a very delightful week with the Duke and Duchess of Argyll in September last at Inveraray. Almost all the family were there, Lady Emma also; the Dowager-Duchess of Sutherland, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gladstone) and Dean Milman (of St. Paul’s), with their wives. It was brilliant weather and a brilliant time.

\* The late Rev. Dr. Lewis, the representative of the Free Church of Scotland in Rome.

† Mr. Caie had formerly been tutor in the family of the Duke of Argyll.



"I preached in the Grand Saloon, and got the Chancellor to lead the psalmody."\*

"INVERARAY, September, 1865.

"The old Dean is a pattern to us all. He tells me that he is now seventy-five; that, notwithstanding, he is at work every morning at seven o'clock; that such has been the habit of his life; that he counts his morning hours, when the body is recruited by sleep and the mind is fresh, the precious hours of the day for study and acquiring knowledge, and that he owes to them, chiefly, all his acquisitions and his position in life. Now I wish all my children who read this letter to lay that up in their heart.

"He is very clever and witty. In the course of conversation to-day, Mr. Gladstone said to the Dowager-Duchess, 'We shall ask the Dean; he knows everything.' He did not catch the remark; I did: whereupon I turned to him, saying, 'Mr. Gladstone wished you to answer him a question, whether there is not a passage in Cicero where he speaks of the Heathen Temples being supported from the income of estates far remote from the Temple itself?' This Mr. Gladstone prefaced, laughingly, by the remark, 'Mr. Dean, you know everything.' He could recollect no such passage; but turned to me, saying, 'The Chancellor, with his compliments, reminds me of a remark which I heard Sydney Smith make of Whewell, who' (added the Dean) 'really thought, what I am far from thinking of myself, that he knew everything.' 'Whewell's forte,' said Sydney of him, 'is science; his foible is omniscience.'"

Alluding to the latter years of Dr. Guthrie's life, Dr. Candlish thus spoke:—"He grew, as I would desire to grow, more and more from year to year, in sympathy with all who love Jesus, and hold the truth as it is in Him. To our own Church he was to the last loyal and loving—none more so." It was in the evening of his life that he was led to interest himself specially in God's work on the Continent; but his regard for the wel-

\* Dr. Guthrie preached once again at Inveraray Castle when, in August, 1871, the Marquis of Lorne brought home his royal bride.



fare of his own denomination at home was no way lessened thereby. He never, indeed, had any special taste or capacity for being what an old Highland woman warned her pastor against becoming, "a *business* minister;" and, as years advanced, the state of his nervous system unfitted him altogether for the heat of debate, so that he seldom took part in the deliberations, either of his Presbytery or the General Assembly. But when any special service on behalf of the Free Church was sought from him, he willingly undertook it. At Dr. R. Buchanan's request, in November, 1871, he spoke at a great meeting of Free Church people held in Glasgow, to raise £20,000 towards meeting the spiritual destitution of that city; and there again, in the following month, on behalf of the Free Church Ministers' Sons and Daughters' Society, on the solicitation of his friend, Mr. David Maclagan; but in regard to almost all questions of debate his invariable expression was:—"I am content to be an inside passenger, if the 'leaders' will only drive 'canny.'"

One subject, however, which engaged the Free Church during the last ten years of his life drew him out—that of Union with the other Non-established Presbyterian Churches of Scotland,—which ultimately resolved itself into a keen discussion on the question of a union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches. One could easily have predicted what side Dr. Guthrie would take on such a question; and when the movement was threatened with obstruction and arrest by a minority within



the Free Church, he threw himself into the discussion with much of his old ardour, taking a more prominent part in connection with it than with any other ecclesiastical question since the great struggle of 1843.

It was twenty years after the Disruption that, on a proposal made to her by the United Presbyterian Synod, the Free Church appointed a Committee to negotiate with the other Non-established Presbyterian Churches, with a view to union. But the desire and expectation of such a step had been present to Dr. Guthrie's mind long before. Speaking at a great meeting in Canonmills Hall in the very year of the Disruption, he thus referred to the position of the lately formed Free Church towards the Dissenters:—"We have points of difference, it is true; but what is the use of constantly sticking them in each other's faces? You, Sir James,\* used to wear a sword when you were Lord Provost; but you were not always flisking it into men's faces. Some men are like hedgehogs; you can't touch them but they set up their bristles. For my part, I believe that if hedgehogs would only love each other, they could lie closely enough together! My motto is not 'co-operation without incorporation.' I have no idea of that; but co-operation until and unto incorporation."

Ten years thereafter, the late Sir George Sinclair moved privately in the matter, bringing leading men of the various Churches together under his roof in

\* The chairman was Sir James Forrest, Bart., a staunch Free Churchman.



Edinburgh, to discuss the matter at a series of breakfast parties. Dr. Guthrie attended these, and was cognizant of his host's plans and purposes from the beginning.

“*January 27th, 1853.*”

“MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,—I return you Dr. Brown's \* letter; it is most interesting, and quite like the man. It is to me a melancholy thing to see how the spirit and practice of unity have been and are sacrificed to an unattainable attempt at uniformity. The Churches that honestly hold the truth, and are at one on what constitute the vital and essential doctrines of the Gospel, have yet to learn or read the story of Charles V. and the watches! I would give men more elbow-room, and on many points leave the members and ministers of the Church to differ; among others, on the Voluntary question for instance. I am confident of this, at any rate, that in the course of another generation, the Free Church will be far on in that direction,—a right or wrong one. Such is the course which all bodies will take who are not enjoying the benefits of an Establishment—or are suffering its injuries, as a Voluntary would say. The States of this world are not such, and never have been such, as to encourage the Church to seek union with them.”

Four years thereafter, matters seemed to be ripening hopefully:—

To THE EARL OF KINTORE.

“*EDINBURGH, April 8th, 1857.*”

“MY DEAR LORD KINTORE,—Some two years ago we had various meetings here, at which Dr. Cunningham, Dr. Tweedie, Dr. Hanna and myself, associated with some of our leading elders, conjoined with the leading brethren of the United Presbyterian Church, with the view of preparing the way for a union between our two Churches. We found that no substantial obstacle prevented such a union,—such a desirable consummation. These meetings have been resumed this winter, to the delight and satisfaction of all who attended them; and a series of resolutions have been carefully drawn out, and cordially agreed to by both parties, with the view of these being published, after being signed by some fifty or sixty of the leading elders and members of both Churches.

\* Late Rev John Brown, D.D., of the United Presbyterian Church.



"I should be happy to see all the Presbyterians of Scotland again united in one body. Meantime, there are difficulties in the way of such a union with the Established Church, which only time and God in His providence can remove. But we feel that there is no real obstacle standing in the way of union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches. We agree to differ on some points that have ceased to be of any practical importance to us as an unendowed Church; and we feel that such a union, while it would present to the world a beautiful spectacle of brethren living together in unity, would greatly promote the best interests of religion, and strengthen the hands of religious liberty in our country.

"The movement has begun with the laity (as many great reforms and blessed changes in the Church have done), and it is proposed to confine the signatures to these resolutions in the meantime to them. These resolutions, when signed by a number of the leading laymen of both Churches, are to be published: we hope in this way to prepare the public for a blessed reunion, which, whether it come in our day or not, cannot be far distant.

\* \* \* \* \*

"With kindest regards to Lady Kintore, I have the honour to be,

"Yours very sincerely,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE.

"P.S.—Mr. Brownlow North is to preach for me. I have been much delighted with him; he spoke of you all.—T. G."

To SIR G. SINCLAIR.

"July, 1857.

"MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,—I have all along entertained the opinion that yours is the hand which has been honoured to sow the seed of which another generation will reap the blessed fruit. You have great cause to bless God that you have laid the foundation of a great work. . . It is not true that Galileo, or Bacon, or Adam Smith 'lived before their time,' because they were considered dreamers by many, and many years elapsed before the world embraced their views. They lived in *their proper time*, and did their proper work in the order of Providence, and so have you. If you don't live long enough in this world to see the building rise to its copestone, in heaven you will hear, coming up from this earth, the shoutings of 'grace, grace,' when it is laid amid the jubilant joy of brethren dwelling together in unity."



At length the proposal took a distinct shape in the General Assembly of 1863.

"One of my parents," he said on that occasion, "was a Seceder, a holy and sainted mother; and how she would have rejoiced to see this day! I have been behind the scenes of the Secession body. . . I remember the time that when any man would not swear, and would not drink, and who held family worship, and would talk to a man about his soul, and rebuke a man for his fault, he was sneered at as 'a Seceder.' I remember very well being told by Dr. Burns, of Kilsyth, that he was once travelling in a stage-coach north of Aberdeen, where he encountered a farmer, who, it turned out, was on the way to see his minister about baptism. Dr. Burns seized the opportunity of putting in a word into his ear, and speaking to him about the importance of the ordinance; whereupon the farmer looked at him astonished, and said, 'Ye'll be a *sinceder*, man!' and when Dr. Burns repudiated the connection, and told him that he was mistaken, that he was a minister of the Established Church, the man was more astonished still, and said to him, 'If you're no' a *sinceder*, then ye'll be frae the south.' He added, 'We dinna trouble oorsels much about thae things here. The fact is, if the lairds are guid to us, we dinna fash oorsels about the ministers!'

"I am in the very position to-day," continued Dr. Guthrie, "in which I stood in the year 1848, when I made my first speech as a Free Church minister in a Free Church Assembly . . . I never will rest contented—I never will cease to pray and work until that end (union) is achieved; and as I do so I will bury in oblivion the memory of former controversies. I do not come here to make a confession, for I made it long ago. I am not ashamed to confess that in the Voluntary controversy, while my opponents said things to me and my party that they ought not to have said, I also said things to them and their party which I ought not to have said."

He believed that he knew his Voluntary brethren and their principles better than he did then, and he was heartily prepared to "let bygones be bygones." "That the men, I mean the greater part of the men," he wrote



to Sir George Sinclair, September 23rd, 1858, "who lived in the days of the Voluntary Controversy should feel less disposed than some of us to this union is but natural. Every man is not Sir George Sinclair, nor, I will add, your humble servant,—seeing I hold that I have one of those healthy constitutions, blessed with which, a man's wounds don't go on festering and suppurating, but soon heal."

Although the proposal to appoint a negotiating Committee was gone into unanimously in the Assembly of 1863, the tone of some of the speakers indicated that the future of the negotiations might not be quite smooth; but the cloud was then no bigger than a man's hand; and Dr. Guthrie would not allow himself to believe that so reasonable a proposal (as he deemed it) could elicit any serious opposition. So little, in fact, did he anticipate the blackened sky into which that little cloud was ere long to spread itself, that in the previous Assembly he had congratulated the House from the chair on seeing "no ranks frowning here upon ranks there—no right and left hand of the Moderator."

He knew well that there was an important point on which one of the negotiating Churches did hold opinions diverse from those of the Free Church; the United Presbyterians being, as a body, Voluntaries, not only in practice, but in theory and by conviction. But he was early persuaded, and each year's investigation in Committee made it more apparent, that the Voluntarism of these brethren was not the kind of Voluntarism



which in old conflicts had been attributed to them; that it was neither "national atheism," nor anything resembling it. With so many and cogent reasons for union, he could not regard it as other than a great evil that a difference on the one point of the magistrates' relation towards the Christian Church should keep the Non-established Presbyterian Churches asunder,—all the more that the difference concerned a matter which, in present circumstances, was neither a practical one nor ever likely to become so.

Dr. Guthrie and his brethren on the union side were therefore amazed and grieved at the strength of opposition which the comparatively small party within his own Church, hostile to the union, displayed. The Free Church, it was alleged, could not make the question of Establishments an "open" one without compromising her "testimony," and abandoning her distinctive principles. Further, it was maintained that the terms of admission to office in the Free Church bound all her ministers to a belief in the duty of the State to establish and endow the Church. No, replied Dr. Guthrie and his friends; the formula which they sign on ordination has been expressly worded to avoid that. "When I met Dr. Macfarlane, of Greenock," said Dr. Guthrie, "one of the shrewdest and most eminent of the men who came out with us, I said to him, 'I wish, Doctor, in arranging the formula of the Free Church, you would take care that there be nothing about endowments there, to hinder us from uniting with



the United Presbyterian Church when God's time has come ;' and there is nothing of the kind in that formula. Our original Claim of Rights no doubt laid down two principles:—First, that the State was bound to maintain the Church of Christ ; and second, that the Church of Christ was bound to maintain the rights of His crown and His people against the State, should it encroach on them. *The first of these is dropt out.* There is nothing in our formula which binds our ministers, or any one else, to hold the principle of endowments."

His conviction was, that if the opponents of union were allowed to make a belief in the State's obligation to establish a Church a term of ministerial communion, the tendency would be to shrivel up the Free Church into a contracted sect ; "remarkable" (to use his own words) "only for her noble beginning, and her miserable end." He pointed, as a warning, to the fate of other denominations which had pursued a similar policy, magnifying *points* into *principles*. "Let the process of splitting go on, and if we are to split hairs on every point, where is it to end ? I called once upon a blacking-maker, in the Horse Wynd of Edinburgh, and conversed with him about various matters. I found out that he was a Baptist. 'So you are a Baptist,' I said : 'excellent people,—none I respect more.' And pointing to a Baptist chapel near by, I asked him,—'Do you worship there ?' Folding the paper for the blacking, he coolly replied, not so much as raising his eyes, 'I once did, but not now.' 'Where then ?' 'Well, you see, sir,' he



said, 'we split, and about thirty of us left.' 'And where do you go now?' He said, 'Nowhere. The others have left; one man has gone to Glasgow, another man went to Greenock, a third to Dundee, and there are now just my wife and me.' Had I been wicked enough, I might have raised a controversy between this poor man and his wife, and split them next!"

This is not the place to record the history of the Union conflict within the Free Church:—suffice it to say, that after ten years of negotiation, the Union remains still unaccomplished. To that extent, its opponents can claim success. But its friends believe that they have achieved a better success; that by a careful sifting of principles in committee they have proved the substantial oneness of the negotiating Churches, and reduced their points of disagreement to a minimum. It has been proved that the United Presbyterian Church holds, as substantially as does the Free Church, the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the nations; and, while she denies the application of that doctrine which requires the State to legalise a particular denomination, that she is at one with other Presbyterians on the deeper question of the responsibility of civil rulers with respect to religion and the Church of Christ. A solid basis for future incorporation has thus been formed, and a practical result has meanwhile been gained in the passing of "The Mutual Eligibility Law" by the General Assembly of 1873, whereby the Free and United Presbyterian Churches may now interchange their ministers.



Dr. Guthrie would indeed have liked to have seen a much greater advance than this. He would, even at the risk of a partial secession from his own Church, have gone through with the union on which his heart was set. "It clouds the evening of my days," he said, "to think that we cannot, while retaining our differences, agree to bury our quarrels in a grave where no mourner stands by—a grave above which I can fancy angels pausing on the wing, and uniting in this blessed song, 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.'"

When in 1868 he preached Sir David Brewster's funeral sermon, he told how on his death-bed that Christian philosopher had spoken of this union, and with what ardour he longed to see it accomplished. To that eminent man's last testimony he was by-and-by to add his own; during his last days at St. Leonard's the subject was repeatedly on his lips.

Did Dr. Guthrie then, it may be asked, become in latter years a Voluntary? Theoretically he never abandoned the belief, that circumstances may exist in which it is lawful and expedient for a Church to receive endowment from the State. "I have no objection," he said in 1862, "to join the Established Church in point of principle. I believe our successors won't hold the high establishment principle that we do; but I am to carry it with me to the grave." At the same time he frankly avowed a change in his views as to the value and desirableness of a State connection. "As to the duty of the State to bestow, and of the Church to receive, endowments" (to use



his own words in 1872), "that is a matter of opinion. I had an opinion once on that subject. It is very much modified now, to say the least of it; and the only thing I am sorry about is, that I cannot declare myself an out-and-out Voluntary, and see if they (the opponents of union with the United Presbyterian Church) would turn me out of the Church on that account!"

Did he look with hope to a probable reunion with the Established Church? In 1860 he thus expressed himself in a letter to the Duke of Argyll—

"EDINBURGH, January 24th, 1860.

"MY DEAR DUKE,—. . . As to a union between the Established and Free Church, I have been all along most anxious to see all Presbyterians united in our country, while at the same time I look with the deepest interest on the problem we are working out, viz., whether a Church under favourable circumstances is able without aid from the State to fulfil its mission with vigour and success; its mission being that of every living being, viz., maintaining itself, and propagating its species. The present condition of the State is not that which our forefathers counted on when they married Church and State together, and as we in Scotland are in respect of position, wealth, and numbers in more favourable circumstances than any other denomination has been to give this experiment fair play, I am anxious to see it fairly tried, sufficiently tested.

"I have a strong wish on the other hand to see all the Presbyterian parties united, and if that is to be brought about, it can only be in the way your Grace points at. Some two or three years ago the Marquis of Tweeddale was so kind as ask me to have a talk with him on that very subject. He was anxious to see the breach healed. I told him then that I did not believe any Act of Parliament could be so drawn out as to *redd the marches* between, in all cases, matters civil and ecclesiastical, that in fact the disputes about jurisdiction rose up after the battle had begun in another quarter, that the *origo malorum*, the root of all our secessions and disruptions in Scotland, was to be found in the law of patronage, and that,



were that Act to be abolished, I believed that the great hindrance to reunion would be removed. Were that done, I would consider the grand end of the Disruption accomplished, and if our having left the advantages and comforts of the Establishment should lead in the end to the restoration of the rights of the people, and more protection than any of the Churches now enjoy against the Edinburgh-made law of the Court of Session, I should be willing that we should vanish; and would think our sufferings and sacrifices had been well endured.

"I have the honour to be, yours very truly,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

Did that letter stand alone, the views of the writer might possibly be misunderstood; not so, when read in the light of his sentiments as expressed in more recent years. The words which follow were spoken from the Moderator's chair of the Free Church Assembly in 1862, and carry therefore all the weight of a carefully considered public utterance:—"If it were said to me, suppose Government were to give you all that you asked, spiritual independence and the free choice of pastors, are you prepared to accept the terms? Well, committing nobody but myself, I reply, I have no objection on the score of principle; but I am not prepared on the score of expediency to accept the terms. I was lately lamed, and was under the necessity for some time of using crutches; and perhaps you will allow me to borrow an illustration from this circumstance. Well, I am not prepared to give up going on my own feet to resume the crutches; I am not prepared to do so for this reason, that after I had lost the power of walking, and had come to depend on the crutches, the State may do again what the State has done before,



knock them from under me, and leave me lying a helpless slave at her feet."

The longer he lived, the less he cherished the expectation of seeing Scottish Presbyterianism united on the basis of a reconstructed Established Church. It rejoiced his heart to hear of unions among the Presbyterian Churches in Australia, in Canada, and the United States, where Establishments have no existence; and, looking to the future in Scotland, he repeatedly expressed the conviction which he thus illustrates in a letter to Sir George Sinclair:—"I have no doubt that the existence of Establishments is, just like that of the Mahommedan powers in Turkey, a question of time. Their foundations are year by year wearing away, like that of an iceberg which has floated southward into warm seas, and, as happens with that creation of a cold climate, they will by-and-by become topheavy, the centre of gravity being changed, and topple over. What a commotion then!"

He continued to take a lively interest in many matters of national as well as ecclesiastical concern;\* and though his relations with the public were now chiefly of a literary kind, his voice was not unfrequently heard on public questions. "It is no exaggeration," writes an impartial authority,† "to say that

\* In 1869 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

† *Saturday Review*, March 1, 1873.



he could speak more powerfully to the mass of the Scotch people than any man since the death of Chalmers. He was so little of a Free Churchman in a sectarian sense that if Scotchmen had sought some champion to do battle against any great social wrong, the mass of them would, irrespectively of their creeds, have singled out Dr. Guthrie."

"I think," he wrote to Miss Elliott Lockhart, in November, 1869, "the longer I live, my burdens in some respects are growing greater—the weightier, as I am growing the weaker. Adam Black had agreed on Saturday last to deliver a lecture to the working classes on unions, strikes, &c. His views on these subjects not being likely to correspond with those of many of the workmen, a row was expected. Adam wrote me to that effect; and, trusting to me as (according to him) more likely than most people to be able to quell a tumult, he begged me to appear in Dunedin Hall on Saturday evening at eight o'clock.

"There was a mighty crowd; some four or five drunken fellows excepted, the people behaved remarkably well. I looked with great admiration on the fine broad foreheads and intelligent faces of these sons of toil. You saw at a glance—right or wrong on the subject in hand—these men were no weaklings or fools."

The question of National Education, as indicated in Chapter XI., engrossed much of Dr. Guthrie's attention in his closing years, and the legislation to which it gave rise he hailed with genuine satisfaction as full of hope



for the future. It was with very different feelings he contemplated the action of Parliament on another question intimately connected with public morals.

The grounds, purposes, and results of the Contagious Diseases Acts involved details very distasteful to him. He thought it his duty nevertheless to investigate them carefully, and did not shrink from expressing opinions which, however unpopular in certain quarters, were the result of his deepest convictions.

" . . . The police ought to have no more to do with infamous establishments but to break them up, regarding them as public nuisances equally dangerous and disgraceful to the community, not to be regulated but to be destroyed ; and distinguishing between liberty and license, between an incentive to virtue and an incentive to vice, between those who follow an honest, and those who live by an infamous occupation, the police ought to clear our streets of all who are an offence to decency and live by the wages of iniquity.

" Our chief magistrate, Lord Provost Chambers, has done so to a considerable extent here, much to his honour and to the satisfaction of the inhabitants ; nor is there a Mayor in England or Provost in Scotland but might, and should, follow his example. If they have not in all cases power to do so, let them apply to Parliament and get it. It is monstrous to see how they will haul up and punish, by fine or imprisonment, some poor decent creature who has thrown a heap of ashes on the street, and yet allow it to be infested with living nuisances who, while corrupting the morals of the thoughtless, are a thousand times more revolting to the feelings of the pure and right-minded members of the community.

" Not that I have any great faith in police action, even when most wisely, vigorously, and virtuously employed. The true remedy appears to me to lie in raising the moral tone of society ; and for this purpose, the press, the platform, and especially the pulpit, must speak out in plainer, louder tones than they have been accustomed to use." (*To Mrs. Wills, Bristol.*)

He regarded the introduction of the Contagious



Diseases Acts with mingled regret and indignation. He had no faith in their proving successful, even for the objects which primarily led to their introduction—but, in any case, he regarded their principle as radically wrong. Preaching some years before this date on the temporarily successful but “crooked” and eventually ruinous policy of King Jeroboam—“Fatal success!” he exclaimed, “which was followed by results which should teach our statesmen—whether they manage affairs at home or abroad—that no policy in the end shall thrive which traverses the word of God; and that that never can be politically right, which is morally and religiously wrong.”

Of the measure itself he thus wrote—

“EDINBURGH, February 8th, 1871.

“MY DEAR DR. MACKENZIE,— . . . This Bill is one of the most atrocious attacks which has been made in my day on the morals of our country. My hope is that it may turn public attention to the evils of a standing army, which, with its compulsory celibacy, I regard as a standing immorality. Pay our men, as Cromwell did, double the wages of a day-labourer (Henry VIII. did the same), give them the means and opportunity of enjoying the blessings and practising the virtues of domestic life, and you need no Contagious Diseases Bills; and since two such men, I undertake, will lick any half-dozen of the debased and debilitated blackguards of our High Street, and St. Giles's, and Salt-markets, from the scum of which our armies are now recruited, you will be even cheaper in the end.\* I

\* Dr. Guthrie had many communications with Sir Charles Trevelyan and with military men on the condition of the army. Closely connected with his views as to an improved condition of things among our soldiers, was his hearty sympathy with the Volunteer movement. At an interesting Volunteer fête at Lochnaw Castle, when on a visit to Sir A. Agnew, M.P., he said,—“Two of my sons are already Volunteers, and should (which God forbid) the enemy land upon our coast, I would go with my sons to the battle-field, not to fight, but to cheer them on and share in their peril, in defence of all we hold dear.”



stand on the principle of morality against the Bill, but it would be well could you smash its supporters by facts and details."

He accompanied a deputation to Government on the question that same year.

"WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL, 19th July, 1871.

"Yesterday was the quietest day I have had for years. Save an occasional question to the guard and railway officials, I did not open my mouth, but at the dinner-table at York, from ten in the morning to ten at night!"

"July 21st, 1871.

"The *Times*, which is on the other side, gives a brief account in this morning's issue of our interview with Mr. Bruce. You would suppose from reading it, that two hundred men and women with flying hair and clenched hands, and screams of indignation and rage, carrying the Home Office by storm, burst in on the astonished Bruce! The *Times*, you would see, speaks in complimentary terms of my appearance. I was thankful, when it was over and I found the impression that I had made, that I was borne up and through so well; for I had nothing prepared, being prepared to accommodate my remarks to circumstances, and, indeed, said things which only came into my head when I was on my feet and in the thick of my address to the Home Secretary." (*To Mrs. Guthrie.*)

From the time of his retirement, in 1864, Dr. Guthrie lived less continuously at home than in former years. The altered nature of his avocations permitted him to move about, and he found that variety of scene and of society conduced much to the maintenance of his general health. In 1866, he pitched his tent for the summer months on the shore of Loch Fyne, occupying the Free Church Manse of Inveraray.\* One

\* In remembrance of that visit, a life-size bust has been placed in the external wall of the Manse, by the Duchess of Argyll, with an in-



reminiscence, among many others, of that pleasant time, he has preserved in a speech made at the annual meeting of the Glasgow Foundry Boys' Society, on whose platform he appeared in 1870 along with Dr. Norman MacLeod. Some hundred and fifty of the lads had spent a day or two at Inveraray during "Glasgow Fair," and Dr. Guthrie invited them to the Manse:—

"I remember on a beautiful summer evening, when the boys drank tea on the lawn before our door, they sang and we sang; they cheered and we cheered back again; and I can tell you, Dr. Macleod, that the 'clerical enamel' was like to be rubbed off on that occasion, and I was disposed to say with regard to clerical dignity, what Shakespeare says of physic—'Give it to the dogs!'"

The perfect seclusion, however, which Lochlee afforded him, gave to his country quarters there one of their chief attractions; and almost every season to the close of life he found his way back again to the Grampians.

"We are all in the bustle of emigrants, being about, in an hour or so, to start for Brechin on our way to Lochlee. I could not but think and feel, how different this morning from those when we used to leave town for the glen, fifteen or twenty years ago—a lot of bairns of all sizes, all on the *qui vive*, noisy and frolicsome, the elder ones trying to keep the younger in order; the doors of the railway carriage stuck full of heads, which, with the smoke of the engine and dust of the road, were, by the time they reached Brechin, begrimed enough! Now, almost all are scattered, and yet, in God's mercy, all are spared. Johnnie lies in his quiet grave; or, rather, is with Christ in heaven. But he was never in Lochlee—so that, with many pleasant and delightful recollections of all the family round us, and the happiness of other days, the glen has no melancholy memories."

scription. The bust is by W. Brodie, R.S.A., a member of Dr. Guthrie's congregation, who executed another in marble, which is placed within St. John's Free Church.



His own impression was, that the annual period of rest to body and mind which he enjoyed in that Highland solitude was to a large degree instrumental in prolonging his days; but an accident which he met in 1867 threatened very unexpectedly to end them there. He recounts this adventure to his friend, W. F. Cumming, Esq., M.D.,\* Kinnellan—

“INCHGRUNDBLE, LOCHLER, *June 20th, 1867.*

“MY DEAR DR. CUMMING,—I obey the impulse I felt yesterday, when reading the account of the *swimming race*, to say how glad I was to see your name again associated with Ragged Schools—kindness to poor children—and, moreover, with an excellent branch of education to all, be they rich or poor, cared for or neglected. Brought up in Edinburgh, my eldest boys did not enjoy the advantage I had in Brechin, which is washed by the South Esk river, where, when a very little fellow (if such tall men as you and I were ever very little!) I learned the art. I still remember the pride of that summer day, when I for the first time ventured beyond my depth, and plunging in at the head of a strong current, went bravely through the great, deep, black pool at its tail. We considered such a feat equal to the *toga*.

“I have not been able to get either to loch or stream all this week. I am writing this in bed. I have no cause to fret at this trial; but much cause to bless God for his marvellous goodness to me and mine. The wonder is, that my wife, my sons Patrick and Sandy, and myself are all in the land of the living. We four were returning from church on Sunday in a droskey, which was drawn by my own mare ‘Ogilvie,’ along a road very good in its way, but with Highland ups and downs, rough dykes here and great boulders there by its side, and narrow bridges crossing river and mountain streams. The mare had been ill harnessed, and, as we found afterwards, the lock of the conveyance had been galling the legs of the poor brute. She took to a very hard trot, then to a canter, then to a gallop, and from that to a pace like the rush of a railway train! In vain I and Sandy, who sat with me in front, pulled her in. Our united strength went for nothing, but ere long to snap the reins, and

\* Author of “Notes of a Traveller.”



leave us four seated behind her to look helpless on the mad animal as she tore along. As braes and bridges, dykes and boulders were ahead, I considered and concluded that, though dangerous, the safest plan was (taking care not to be entangled with the conveyance, and so dragged by the clothes), to throw ourselves out—which calling on the others to do, I did. They tell me I fell with a heavy *thud* on the road, where, on coming to my senses, I found myself lying. I had been stunned—my head was *dirling*, and *dirtled* for hours afterwards, my elbow bruised and skinned, the brim of my hat broken, and the top *squashed* in. The hat, no doubt (much abused as is the fashion of our English hats), was to me, as it has proved to many besides, a helmet of salvation."

The others remained in the droskey; and the runaway mare being stopped at a stiff brae, Dr. Guthrie again got in. But the worst was to come:—

"Not knowing, then," he goes on to tell, "the cause of the evil, and fancying that we had been exposed to this danger by the mare having been startled by the sudden whistle and flapping of a *whaup*, which rose close beside her from the moor at her first outbreak, we resumed our seats, having been supplied from a small farm on the roadside with powerful plough reins in place of the broken leathers.

"All went on well till we came within two or three hundred yards of a narrow, high, old-fashioned bridge that spans the North Esk; here was our greatest danger, and here, to our astonishment and consternation, off 'Ogilvie' started as mad and uncontrollable as ever. We hauled on the plough reins. We could not pull her up, but they bore the strain, and thereby we were able, though we could not arrest, to guide her course. As we went thundering on towards the bridge, we were quite alive to the extremity of our danger, knowing that if we did not clear it, we should all be hurled out against the parapet, or over it into the bed of the river, here filled with great stones, and either way in all probability be killed. We cleared, but only cleared its turnings, leaving the mark of our axles on some of its stones. This done, we breathed: an iron forest gate was before us, and a rise of the ground before that. We should be stopped at the first, at any rate; but, ere we reached it, the wheels of the droskey got into a deep rut on the one side, the machine rose on



the other, and the mare at that moment making a sudden turn, I was flung out, and lighting with my whole weight (before I measured my length on the ground) upon the outside of my right foot, I suffered a sprain, which gave me at the time dreadful pain, and from which I expect to suffer for some time to come.\* The mare was stopped; and now here we are, mercifully preserved, but taught more than we ever were, practically at least, before, how soon we may be hovering on the borders of eternity, and what need there is ever to be living so, that when we die, we may die to the Lord. My dear friend, may a gracious God, with His most precious mercies, sweeten your trials. Let me hear how you are.

"Ever yours with affectionate regards,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

His visits to London during the latter years of his life were frequent; the ever-widening circle of friendships he formed there, as well as the sources of interest which that mighty human hive presents, making it more and more a congenial residence to him.

"RADCLIFFE HOUSE, BRIXTON RISE, LONDON,

"18th March, 1868.

"Your mother and I lunched yesterday with Mrs. Kemble, a sister of the celebrated London preacher, Henry Melville, who was for many years the Chalmers of London. He kindly came into town to meet us at lunch. He was most kind and courteous. He knew all about the Brechin affair, of Norval being kept out of the charge because he had passed off one of his (Melville's) sermons as his own when on his Veto Trial. He knew Dr. Chalmers and Walter Scott, and had often heard Robert Hall preach when a student at Cambridge. We discussed all manner of matters. He is very lively, clever, and frank. When we parted he laid his hand on my shoulder, saying, 'Now, Dr. Guthrie, I will say to you what one of our clergy said to

\* To another friend, in detailing the accident, he wrote: "Sandy and I were carted home; and when jolt after jolt made me clench my teeth, I thought of the poor fellows who are driven in rumbling ambulances, suffering from horrible wounds, off a field of battle. We have great cause to be very thankful. May our spared lives be more and more devoted to the glory of God!"



Robert Hall, and perhaps you will make to me his reply. Said the clergyman to Hall, "Mr. Hall, I love and honour you notwithstanding you have *not* episcopal ordination ;" and, said Hall to the clergyman, "And I love and honour you notwithstanding you *have* episcopal ordination."

"March 23rd, 1868.

"Yesterday I resolved to see with my own eyes the largest exhibition I could get of the Ritualism of the Church of England. The congregation consisted chiefly of very poorly or very grandly dressed women and of young men. Mine was the only grey head in the church. The appearance of the young men (I speak of them *en masse*) was quite marked. I found that it had forcibly struck Mr. Chubb as well as me. Poor fellows, they were devout, indeed some of them most devout like; but they had long necks, very sloping shoulders, faces like birds, low foreheads, and retiring chins. As I looked at some of them in the pews before me, they recalled to my mind the caricatures of Ritualists you see in *Punch*. Often during the service I thought of Sydney Smith's description of Puseyism and Ritualism, '*posture and imposture*.' My spirit was stirred within me, and after what I have seen I shall be more ready than ever to say that unless the Church of England will rid herself of her Popish rags, and take immediate and vigorous measures to cast such things out of the house of God, the Establishment must be abolished.

"In the evening we went to Spurgeon's,—seven thousand people there; a sublime and overpowering spectacle—the whole worship and discourse an admirable antidote to the poison of the forenoon—a feast after starvation, as I told Spurgeon himself. A curious coincidence:—he came down like Thor the Thunderer on the Ritualists of the Church of England; and when speaking of the uncertainty of earthly treasures, he declared that no care could keep them, nor bolts or bars, or even *Chubb's locks*. Mr. Chubb and he had a laugh about this, when we saw him after service. He had observed me in the gallery, or some of his staff had. He sent one of his deacons to ask me to come and see him, so we all went, and had a few minutes' very pleasant talk."

"39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, KENSINGTON, W., April 8th, 1869.

"MY DEAR ANNE,—On our way to Chester, we had for company a nice, hearty Methodist from Southport, who had heard me speak there on the Waldensian Cause. Like our friend Mr.



Bunting, he was strongly tainted with Toryism—fearing Gladstone and the Irish Church Bill.

"We had not much more time after our arrival than to get unpacked and dressed for dinner at Argyll Lodge. The company consisted of the family; Lord Shaftesbury and one of his daughters; Lady Gainsborough, now a widow, but graceful and beautiful, and good as ever; Lady Caroline Charteris, Mr. and Mrs. Fuller Maitland, &c. I sat on one hand of the Duchess, Lord Shaftesbury on the other; nor were we long set down, when her Grace set us to discuss the great question of the day—Disestablishment of the Irish Church. . . . I had a message to-day from some of the Commons Poor-Law Committee, wishing to know whether I would give evidence before them, and having strong opinions on that subject, I said I would if I could." (*To his daughter, Mrs. Williamson.*)

"39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, KENSINGTON, W., *April 12th*, 1869.

"MY DEAR PATRICK,—London, and apparently the whole of England, is like a boiling caldron about their Ecclesiastical Establishment. People talk of its gross abuses in a way they never did before; and whatever may be in Providence, all men seem to have made up their minds that the days of such Establishments are numbered. But, whatever may happen with the Irish Establishment, this old Church of England will take a long and strong pull to uproot. However, who can tell? A rock that is undermined, as well as a ripe pear, comes away to a touch.

"Every afternoon we enjoy a drive in the Park, throwing ourselves into one or other of the four streams of carriages. It is really a brilliant and amusing spectacle. Not the least entertaining and pleasant part of the spectacle to me is to see the crowd on foot that stand along the lines, and who, as spectators, seem to have fully as much pleasure in the parade as the actors in it. The show costs them neither cash nor care. Since we came here, the parks have become quite beautiful: the noble elms are fast getting into full leaf: the blossom-spikes of the horse-chestnut are already two or three inches long; while the borders and parterres are splendid with dwarf tulips and brilliant hyacinths. We have had high summer weather for the last four or five days—the thermometer in the shade standing above 70°. This house looks out behind on Holland Park. Without, the fresh spring greenery of the trees is beautiful, and within, in the high Christian worth and endearing kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Maitland, we have everything to make us happy—and thankful to Him from whom all our mercies flow."



"LONDON, 28, WESTBOURNE TERRACE, November 8th, 1970.

"Mr. Chubb having obtained an order from the head of the London police directing an inspector to be waiting to attend 'Dr. Guthrie and four friends' at the Whitechapel police-station by ten o'clock, Strahan and Rowe came out to dine with us at Radcliffe House last Thursday. At nine o'clock we got into Mr. Chubb's carriage, I with my good palm stick, wide-awake, a bandana handkerchief instead of my white neckcloth, and rough coat. We reached the police-station in time, found it full of constables and officers, a very fine-looking set of men, —tried on handcuffs, few of which fitted my wrists, and looked into some of the cells. There was a poor little fellow stretched on his wooden board in one of them, sleeping beneath a rug so soundly that our entrance and the flash of the bull's-eye never stirred him. His sleeping face wore no bad expression; he was twelve years old, and they had him in there for pilfering 4d. worth of sugar! I remonstrated with the lieutenant against their turning that child into a confirmed criminal, expressing my hope that the magistrate or justice before whom he would be charged next day, would sentence him at once to three or four years in a reformatory or ragged school. The stupid magistrate, I see by the newspapers in which this 4d. case is reported, has remanded him for ten or eleven days,—as if there could be any doubt about the wisdom, and justice also, of dealing in my way with the case!

"In due time enters the inspector, who is to be at once our guide and guardian, both of which offices he most successfully and admirably discharged. He has, as he told us, risen from the ranks, and has over £200 a year. Better be in the police than in the pulpit, in many cases!

"Within ten yards of the police-station is a 'penny-gaff' theatre, and into that we dived. Past one bar for pay and another for drink we went, our guide, as he headed us, giving the presiding genius of each of these posts a nod and a word of recognition, which they returned with a bow; then, brushing shoulders with some very *orra* like characters of both sexes, we got out of a long narrow passage, and, on a door being opened, found ourselves close by the stage, footlights, and three fiddlers of a low theatre. It was not so well filled as usual, owing to the fog which had wrapped London in twilight all day, and was now covering it in a darkness which, like that of Egypt, might be felt. (Such was the fog, that the street lamps, of which you saw no more than the one ahead of you, looked like a painting of a lamp—appearing light, yet giving none.)



"While running over the strange scene and company among whom I had got, I was startled by a man standing beside me, and close by the footlights, shouting forth in stentorian voice, 'Order! order there!' This was an official of the house, who paid great respect to our Inspector, and to us, as being under his wing. I don't believe he ever so much as reflected on the immoral results of his establishment, for, when I engaged him in conversation, he talked most glibly about it, telling me, when a woman appeared on the stage in the dress of a sailor, 'You see, sir, that is our principal Lady;' and directing my attention to an actor who mouthed his words, and sawed the air, and stamped and fumed and roared, saying, 'That, sir, is our principal Gentleman!'

"In another low theatre which we visited, a tall, handsome young woman, with abundant and graceful gesticulations, was singing. She had a sweet as well as powerful voice, and was the only modest-looking woman I had seen among the bold and horrible objects we had encountered that night. On what a company she was wasting her powers, casting her pearls before swine, and probably driven to earn that livelihood by want, and the scant pittance won by a needle in some lone, cold garret! I was very sad to see her; all the more that I had no hand to reach out to her. It was poor comfort to be told that out of these low haunts some of these girls rise to the Opera, leaving the low scum of Wapping to appear before the high fashion of London as singers and ballet dancers—not an inch farther from perdition there.

"We thereafter proceeded to a rather decent-looking street where is a sort of theatre licensed for music, and where athletes also exhibit their feats of strength. Here was the most wonderful display of agility and strength you can imagine on the part of two performers, who hung by the heels in mid-air like two *partans*, amid the plaudits of the house, in which I joined with my stick, quite carried away with this marvellous display of courage, strength, and agility! Under the conduct, again, of the master of the establishment, who was a fat, jolly, cracky *bodie*, and who seemed to take great credit to himself for his not allowing any disreputable characters access to the pit, we next descended to see the company there. Here we saw, mingled with a good many questionable-like characters, a number of tradesmen to appearance, and sailors, who seemed sober, and to have some respect for themselves; and, along with these, a few specimens of their wives and children; but there was not much more difference, so far as moral results were concerned, between the pit and galleries



than between the frying-pan and the fire. It was in all its influences a pest-house.

"We now took our way, on leaving, through whole streets wholly given up to wickedness, the moral darkness of the neighbourhood well symbolized by that in which we were involved. Here, at midnight, both literally and figuratively, 'darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people.' I often could not see a yard before me with all the aid the gas lamps gave, and not seldom I followed the Inspector more by sound than sight. As we went on, he suddenly turned round to say 'Keep close by me,' and dived under a low-browed arch into a very narrow, cut-throat like close or passage. It conducted into one of the lowest slums—a group of wretched and mean-like houses. Going up to the door of one of these, the Inspector called out 'Eliza!' No answer; now he raps with his stick and repeats his call, 'Eliza!' Then, walking on to another door, as the bird seemed to have left the nest empty, he cries out 'Johnstone,' whereupon, after a little delay, descending a narrow, rickety, wooden stair, candle in hand, Johnstone himself, who, with a Scandinavian name, is a Chinaman from the tail on his shaven head to his feet, appears to conduct us up to an opium-smoking establishment."

In another letter, written during that same visit to London, he tells—

"To-day I have been in 'the East End,' as it is called, a quarter full of deep misery and open-faced wickedness. I was visiting the great Seamen's Home there, as well as an asylum for shipwrecked men and others of the marine class who have become wrecks in life. . . .

"I have been gauging both the wickedness and misery of this vast city, and it is only they who have explored it by going down into the pit that have any, or can have any, adequate conception of these. We went away one night to see some places—dancing and music rooms—which are opened under the licence of the magistrates. I shall expose their Worships in the *Sunday Magazine*. I was horrified.

"On the other hand I have stood—I may say hat in hand—before born ladies, who, leaving their compeers and all the pleasures of luxurious and happy homes, have taken up their abode in some of the lowest portions of this city, to save the lost and help the wretched among whom they were passing



their days and nights. Talk of the courage and self-denial of the besiegers of Metz, or Strasbourg, or Paris! They are not to be named with those of these Christian women. When these daily travels of mine bring me among such sights, however saddened and shocked I may be by others, I go back quite cheered, nor know how wearied I am till the day's work is over. (*To Mrs. Wyld.*)

In the early spring of 1871, Dr. Guthrie was honoured by Her Majesty's commands to be present at the marriage of Princess Louise with the Marquis of Lorne:—

"39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, March 22nd, 1871.

\* \* \* \* \*

"St. George's Chapel at Windsor is *magnifique*;—a great stained window above the altar, below which is a vast marble entablature with figures. The Choir has a lofty ornamented Gothic roof, and on each side are stalls of oak black as night, and of the richest carving: above each, rises, of the same material, a minaret with the insignia of the Knights of the Garter in gold; from the top hang their swords, and over all float their banners. The seats below these stalls are carried along from the screen up to the steps of the altar. Fill these seats four deep with ladies, nobles, gentlemen, in all manner of brilliant costumes, and throw the sunbeams in, as they came streaming down that day on my side of the Choir, turning diamond wreaths and coronets into living, flashing beams and stars of light; and you will have then some idea of the scene St. George's offered to my admiration. There might be thirty or forty persons already in the Chapel when I entered. The Prime Minister and Mrs. Gladstone sat immediately behind me. By-and-by entered Lady Beaconsfield and her husband, Disraeli, the ex-Prime Minister. She sat on my left hand, and Disraeli beyond her.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Drums roll, bugles sound, the organ puts forth all its power and pipes, and everybody says to himself, 'Now appear the Queen!' Gold Stick and Silver Stick, tabarded heralds, and Garter all in cloth of gold, walking backwards with admirable dexterity (art here conquering nature), then enters Majesty herself. All the house on foot, down goes every head, and bent is every back as she sails magnificently up the passage, bowing now to the right hand, and now to



the left. . . . I had no eyes for any but the mother and daughter. The song, 'There's nae luck about the hoose,' describes my feelings in the line 'In troth I'm like to greet !' I thought of the Prince Consort that day sleeping in his tomb ; of my kind friend the Duchess of Sutherland, now no more, and how happy she had been had she lived to see her grandson standing at the altar with that fair royal maid. It was a most touching sight to see the Widowed Queen, with her heart in her husband's grave, taking the place of the dead, and leading up her daughter to the marriage altar ; and, to the credit of humanity in high places be it said, other eyes than mine were wet.

"The sight would have moved the heart of John Knox, and almost induced him to burn his book written against what he calls 'The Monstrous Regiment of Women.' I had never seen the Queen before, except for a brief moment, on a cold day, as she sat wrapped up in her carriage at Ballater, when passing on to Balmoral. Here, on the wedding-day, she was radiant with smiles, bright as the diamonds of the tiara on her head. The broad blue riband of St. George, crossing one shoulder, passed over her breast ; some grand orders there, and a brilliant piece of diamond jewellery. It was wonderful to see, little and stout as she is, what majesty and dignity were in her port ; in that reminding me of what Dr. Fairbairn, who was an elder of mine in St. John's, told me of Napoleon Bonaparte. He was, in 1815, an assistant-surgeon aboard the Admiral's ship which received Bonaparte, when, beaten at Waterloo, he fled from France and yielded himself a prisoner to our fleet. The little man was fat and pursy in person, yet such, said Dr. Fairbairn, was his imperial bearing, that when he walked forward to the Admiral to deliver himself up on the deck, where all the officers and men were gathered in a state of the highest wonder and excitement, he looked anything but like a prisoner—looked every inch a king. So Victoria really looked every inch a Queen ; mind shining through matter, and asserting its superiority over it. The habit of command has stamped majesty on her brow and bearing.

"I saw in this Woman also the majesty of law. As in our streets, when a man, amid a rude and unruly mob, draws from his pocket the small silver-tipped baton of a constable, that symbol, in the hands of one whom some of the roughs could double up in a moment, is respected as much as if the owner of it had a regiment of soldiers at his back ; so it was wonderful to see One, herself physically weaker than any man in that room, receiving the homage of all as their Sovereign ;



in whose presence all stood uncovered; before whom, as she advanced up that Choir, with no armed men at her back, not even a crown on her head, all heads were bowed. She was there the embodiment of Law *versus* License, of Order *versus* Misrule; and it was wonderful to think that, as such, a hundred thousand swords would leap from their scabbards, to obey that little Woman's orders, and defend her person and her throne!

\* \* \* \* \*

"Before luncheon in the Waterloo Gallery, the company assembled in the White Drawing-room. . . . Mr. Theodore Martin and I were expatiating most cordially, like two leal-hearted Scotchmen, on the worth of our countrymen and beauties of our country, and on the honours that had crowned her brow that day, when I saw a movement ahead of me,—a 'moving of the waters,' as it were. Behold, the Queen had come in to see the guests. I was reminded of the parable of the marriage feast.

"She was sweeping rapidly along the inside of the oval figure into which the two hundred guests had opened, as if her entrance had been the discharge of a mitrailleuse in the crowd, and I was on the outside of the oval with four or five deep between Her Majesty and me. As she marched along, she bowed in passing. Carrying a handkerchief in one hand, she gave, to those she specially noticed, a rapid wave with the other. She had almost finished the circle, when I saw, as she raised her head and looked round, that her eye had caught me. She must have known me, probably, from the photographs. She immediately turned to Lord Lorne, whispering in his ear. He looked in my direction, and I saw that after a little he also discovered me. On this he spoke to her, and immediately, attended by him, the Queen swept across the open space, and came right up to us. I had by this time a pretty clear idea of what was to happen, but, like a 'canny Scot,' gave no sign. The Marquis, with a very audible voice, as he stood by the Queen, called out, 'Dr. Guthrie!' and then, to be sure, a lane was made in the ranks before me, and stepping forward, while Her Majesty said something I did not catch, I recalled on a sudden the facings of the dancing-school (where I very unwillingly went through my 'steps' fifty years ago), and made what I thought, a very handsome bow!"\*

\* "I can never forget his cordial salutation," writes Mr. Theodore Martin to us, "when I introduced myself to him at Windsor. How well I remember his surprised look of disbelief, when I said to him, 'The



Resolving in the autumn of 1871, to carry out a long-cherished wish, he visited the Shetland Isles, and during the trip was in the highest spirits.

“KERGORD, WEISDALE, SHETLAND, *September 20th*, 1871.

“Here am I, in the *Ultima Thule* of the old Romans, so far on my way to Unst, the most northerly part and parish of Her Majesty’s British dominions, where I am to stand without a bit of land between me and the Pole, but out of sight of the Scotchman who, they say, sits atop of it. But, God sparing us to meet, I shall see a man there worth turning aside to see—the Patriarch of these islands of the sea, and the oldest working minister in Britain, perhaps in Europe, perhaps in either the Old World or the New. I refer to Dr. Ingram, Free Church Minister of Unst. His son, who is, and has been for many a long year and day, his assistant and successor, would be by all but those who are his own age accounted an elderly man; and as to Dr. Ingram himself, he is ninety-five years old, and occasionally preaches still, having a voice like a trumpet, looking fresh as an apple, and retaining all his senses and faculties, save that of hearing. I am told that it is forty years since he has been in Scotland, which I find the Scandinavians here account almost a foreign land.” (*To Lady Louisa Agnew.*)

“EDINBURGH, *October*, 1871.

“In Shetland we knocked about in boats wonderfully constructed to live in and ride over the tempestuous seas there, and rode on the backs of ponies not much bigger than calves, and so thick and pot-bellied that, when I attempted to come off, the saddle rolled round with me, but I never fell, as my feet were but a few inches from the ground!

“‘Voes’ are long, narrow arms of the sea, and in looking down from high ground on these voes, shining like burnished gold in the setting sun, and gemmed with islands of various forms and hues, I sometimes thought I had seen nothing more lovely in Italy. Besides, they abound with sea-trout. At Walls, D—— and I killed four-and-twenty with fly one afternoon, and it is famous sport. How the reel sings as the line spins out; and how beautiful the fish, as it springs from the salt water into the air like a bar of molten silver!

Queen is looking for you, to speak to,’ while she was still a long way off, and he was standing behind the crowd avoiding the gaze which they were courting.”



"What a multitude of people we heard of who have turned the corner of ninety years! and the children are as thick as bees or blackberries. Dr. Ingram,\* the Free Church Minister of Unst, the most northerly parish of Her Majesty's British dominions, in whose pulpit I preached, and in whose house we lived some three or four days, is in his ninety-seventh year! He preaches occasionally still, has the fresh colour of a child, and a voice like Stentor; and, with no defect but deafness, is as clever and full of fun as you, and with a devoutness I covet—for the Apostle bids us covet the best gifts." (*To Mrs. Wyld.*)

In December, the Annual Meeting of his Ragged Schools was held in the Music Hall, which was crowded in every corner, the Marquis of Lorne occupying the chair. Dr. Guthrie spoke at great length, and with even more than his usual animation. Looking back over the twenty-four years of his interest in the Institution, he touchingly adverted to the passing away, one after another, of almost all those with whom he had been associated in its earliest days. "Help, Lord," he exclaimed, in closing, "for the godly man ceaseth! Jesus now calls on you to save these children, for His sake as well as their own. And more than that, I can fancy Him pointing to yonder poor, starving, weeping boy, to say as Joseph did of Benjamin to his brethren, 'You shall not see my face except your brother be with you!'"

Little did the solemnised assembly, whom he addressed

\* This truly venerable man still lives (1875), in his 100th year. Dr. Guthrie was so interested in him that, on returning to Edinburgh, he lithographed a letter regarding Dr. Ingram, and circulated it among some friends. The result was that an admirable portrait of the patriarch was secured for the Free Church College, Edinburgh, painted by Otto Leyde, A.R.S.A., while a smaller portrait and service of plate were presented to Dr. Ingram for retention in his family.



that day, think they were never to hear his familiar voice from that platform again !

Cheered as the evening of Dr. Guthrie's life continued to be by much happiness and abundant prosperity, the lengthening shadows became more discernible to him each year. He felt increasingly the need of rest. "We have not had a visitor to cross the door," he wrote to Mrs. Guthrie, in February, 1870, from his eldest daughter's house in Peebles-shire; "and that is the life that now suits me, along with a good measure of '*vagabondage*'—wandering about for that measure of pleasant excitement which the slow-going blood of age needs." "Very sensible are the old dogs," he wrote again, in allusion to his advancing years, "who spend most of their time stretched out on a hearth-stone before the fire, or lolling on the doorstone on a sunny day; but one would like to be doing something for our God and Saviour while he is here."



## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CLOSING YEAR.

IN 1872 Dr. Guthrie had reached his sixty-ninth year; and, though incapable of any severe exertion, he appeared so full of life and spirits, that his friends anticipated several years of usefulness yet in store for him.\*

"1, SALISBURY ROAD, EDINBURGH, *January 5th, 1872.*

"MY DEAR MISS BEEVER,—We were delighted to receive your letter this morning. You never forget the poor [ragged] *bairns*. The two £5 notes came safe to hand. I need not say how warmly I feel to you for your steady and very valuable friendship to a cause I have much at heart. I will ask you to give my very sincere respects to your cook and housemaid.† Were the rest of mankind a hundred part as generous and self-denying, what good cause would have to complain of want of funds? May the Lord bless them; for (as the Apostle exhorted servants in his day to do) they certainly 'adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour.'

"I sympathize with you on the loss of the magpie, as told in one of your letters to my grandsons, Tom and Lawrence,—letters of which they are amazingly proud, each more anxious than the other that I should read Miss Beever's letter to him. Speaking of magpies, we were amazed at the number of these birds in Brittany; they are there in flocks almost like *crows* (or, as you call them in England, *rooks*) in our island. Ours, by-the-bye, is, I suspect, the old English word; this I infer from

\* The portrait on the opposite page was taken by Messrs. Downey, of London, in January, 1872.

† Who for years had sent, and still continue to send, through Miss Beever, nearly £3 annually to Dr. Guthrie's Ragged Schools.





Ever affec<sup>t</sup>ionately,  
Thomas W. Hill









Ever yrs affectionately  
Thomas Sutcliffe







the name they give the stick with an old ragged coat and a crownless hat which farmers and gardeners use to scare off the rooks. It goes by the name, not of a *scare-rook*, but a *scare-crow*.\* In Shetland, where I spent some three weeks in September last, I saw neither crow nor magpie; but, in place of rooks, they have flocks of the 'hooded crow'—a bird of prey.

"I see you are watching for the first footsteps of spring. So am I. The other day I was welcoming some crocuses that were lifting up their heads in my garden to see whether winter was taking his departure; to-day, they have learned that he is here still. Ere this morning broke, came a heavy fall of snow, and now dale and hill are robed in spotless purity. The snow is glistening in the sunshine under a cloudless blue sky; and anything more beautiful than the bushes and trees all feathered could not be. . . .

"I enjoy better health than at an earlier or, indeed, any former period of my life. This may, in part, be due to having got almost entirely rid of a 'mouthful of teeth,' which have been, with intervals of rest and ease, an annoyance and often a torment to me, occasionally making life a burden. Talk of the Martyrs and their sufferings! I have endured twenty times more pain than most of them, and that without the consolation of suffering in a noble cause! Still, I have not settled this question in physiology—whether my bad health was due to toothache, or toothache to my bad health? I fancy they acted and reacted on each other: any way, I can quote, with hearty approbation, the Scotch proverb, 'A toom (empty) house is better than an ill tenant.'

"I will close with all the best wishes of the season for you and yours. May a gracious God richly and daily bless you with His precious love and grace.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

(To Miss S. Beever, Coniston, Ambleside.)

\* Though no scientific philologist, Dr. Guthrie had a great taste for tracing affinities in different tongues, and for digging among the roots of words. We have heard him humorously disputing with friends from England about this very word *crow*. "A primitive people," he maintained, "would naturally name birds as well as other animals from the sounds they utter (*cuckoo*, *poewit*, *crake*, &c.). Apply this principle, and you will see that the original name of this bird must have been our Scotch form. You hear a glossy-black fellow, as he sits on a high tree in spring, saying *craw*! *craw*! but when did ye ever hear one calling out *crow*! *crow*!"



In this letter he refers to the improvement in his general health as life advanced. As he said, in writing to another friend, "If I am not *good* looking, I am at least *well* looking." In his later years his figure had become fuller, and his countenance, formerly somewhat haggard, and dusky in hue, had rounded, while the now fresh colour showed well by contrast with the long grey hair. Nevertheless, for years before his last illness he had little ability for any kind of muscular exertion. The ascent of a flight of stairs tried him, and a walk of even two miles left him quite exhausted. A friend who had not seen him for some time, meeting him one day on the street, remarked how robust he looked. "Ah! my good sir," replied Dr. Guthrie, "I may say of myself what James Hamilton of London once said of a certain person. I should tell you, I had said to Dr. Hamilton, 'What can be the secret of ——'s reputation? It has lasted now a number of years. Surely there must be something great about the man after all?' 'Well,' said Dr. Hamilton in his quiet, quaint way, 'no doubt; he is a *great imposition!*' Now, my good friend, I am just like ——. So far as my looks go, I am a *great imposition!*"

In the middle of January, 1872, he went to London, primarily with the view of visiting various of the great Charities there, of which he wished to tell in the *Sunday Magazine*. On the 14th he preached for the Rev. J. T. Davidson, and addressed an audience of 3,000 in the Minor Agricultural Hall, Islington; while a few weeks



thereafter, a proposal was made that he should preach, to another congregation as interesting, if less numerous:—

“ 39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, LONDON, *January 26th*, 1872.

“ MY DEAR CLEMENTINA,—We came up from Essex yesterday afternoon in time for the Templars' dinner. I drove to Mr. Anderson's, who is a Queen's counsel, and with whom (when, as a Scotch advocate, he was counsel for Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, a Chapel-of-Ease Minister, in Arbroath) I had many a conflict more than thirty-six years ago. He and I walked to the Middle Temple, close by his chambers; and he putting on his silk gown, and I putting off my two top-coats, in an anteroom, we were ushered by the officials into a lofty, richly decorated apartment, where the 'masters,' judges, and invited guests were to assemble. Here, I was introduced to one and another of the great dons of the law, as well as to Dr. Vaughan, Master of the Temple. By-and-by an official enters and marches us out by two and two, calling out our names—and then, on what an imposing scene did we enter! At the upper end of a noble hall, one hundred and fifty feet long, I would say, and eighty high to the centre of its open, elaborately carved Gothic roof, stood a raised table, which was allotted to the Benchers, judges, and those of us who were marched up to it. The tables in the body of the hall were already filled by a company who stood up to receive us. They amounted to about two hundred, and consisted of barristers and some hundred and sixty students of law. I sat opposite Sir Thomas Chambers, who was in the chair, and who had Dr. Vaughan on his right and Lord Penzance on his left. On Vaughan's right sat the Lord Chief Justice Cockburn. He looks old but wonderfully fresh, due to his rosy complexion and Scandinavian hair and face.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Hardly excepting St. George's Chapel on the royal marriage day, the spectacle was the grandest I have seen. The only toast given in the Grand Hall was 'Her Majesty.' It was very neatly and well done by Chambers. And, by-the-bye, I must not forget to mention a curious old ceremony. A massive silver cup, filled with wine, was passed from hand to hand at our upper table, each as he drank drinking to 'The pious memory of Master Worsley' (or some such name)—the man who long years ago left the cup to the Templars and a fund to replenish it with wine, that he might thus, in a way, live in their memory for ever.

“ Dinner finished, forming such a procession on leaving as



we observed on entering, we filed out, the students cheering, and calling out the names of some they most admired, and here I was astonished to find myself acknowledged, some calling out 'Guthrie, Guthrie!' which I take to have been done by some kindly Scots. We now entered a spacious room, to find tables garnished with flowers, furnished with wine and loaded with fruit. Then the speechifying proper began. Chambers gave the Rev. Dr. Vaughan as Master of the Temple, in a complimentary speech. Vaughan replied in a very proper address for the ecclesiastical head of the Temple, which he closed by taking notice of my presence, acknowledging very frankly the Presbyterian as a sister Church, and saying that he would be pleased to see me in the pulpit of the Temple—a thing he did very courteously and handsomely, and was cheered. I sat *num*. Thereafter Chambers gave the Lord Chief Justice and other judges; whereupon they all rose, and Cockburn replied for them, speaking in a slow, judicial-like style. Then came the healths of Lord Penzance and another judge, who in their turns rose and briefly acknowledged the compliment. It was my turn next; so up rises Chambers, and with not a few laudatory words, proposes my health, taking occasion to applaud Vaughan's proposal that I should preach in the Temple. It was rather a formidable position for me, with an august company, comprising the talent and genius of the English bench and bar, to face. But I am thankful to say I never was more in possession of myself; so I held on, as they showed no sign of weariness, making the longest speech on the occasion. It was quite unprepared, save that in case I would have to 'hopen' my mouth, I had thought over two or three points—*seria mixta cum jocis*—on my way in the hansom. The *joci* took admirably. I told them the story of Stewart of Goodtrees' epitome of Scotch Law—this, namely, '*Show me the man, and I'll tell you the law!*'' as contrasting our Scotch judges with the English in the olden time; and somehow or other (I forget now how) I lugged in my story of Madame Hiver and her discovery of the man who, though he insisted on it that he was an Englishman, was found to be really an Irishman *by the way he peeled his potatoes!* I complimented Vaughan and the English judges; had a fling, in passing, at the Archbishop of York and Wilberforce and their '*mission service*,' which was remarkably well received; told them how John Knox preached for years in the Episcopal and Established churches of Berwick and London, and avowed my readiness to accept the honour of preaching in the Temple church."



That church not being under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, no obstacle arising from ecclesiastical authority stood in the way. The day was even named for Dr. Guthrie's sermon, and it seemed for a time as if the spectacle were actually to be realised of a Scotch dissenting minister in the pulpit of the Temple Church. But unforeseen difficulties emerged, and the project was abandoned.

"39, PHILLIMORE GARDENS, LONDON, *February 12th*, 1872.

"On Sunday evening we set off to hear a *quondam* clown preach. . . .

"At the close of the service a young woman, whom I had observed singing the hymns with great fervour, and whose countenance wore the celestial expression which Fra Angelico gives to his Saints, stood by the inner door as we went out, distributing tracts. On holding out my hand for one, she said as she gave it, with a sweet smile on her face, 'I hope, sir, you love Jesus?' Some thought, considering my white neckcloth and venerable appearance, this was rather forward on her part, but it was well meant; few Christians err in the direction of faithfulness.

"From this hall, with its interesting services, we plunged at once into Oxford Street: and it seemed like leaving Lot's house to mingle with the crowd in Sodom. The pavements were swarming with wretched women, vapouring about unabashed, in flaunting and gaudy dresses; and gin palaces were blazing with gas, and crowded with customers. Such sights are a shame in a civilised, to say nothing of a Christian, country, enough to bring down the judgments of God on the land. However, let us be thankful for the prospect of better days, and do what we can to hasten them on."

"EDINBURGH, *March 9th*, 1872.

"MY DEAR MRS. WYLD,—I am worn and wearied to-day; so, being indisposed for hard and heavy work, I take, as to a pleasant employment, to writing you a letter, with any rambling account that may suggest itself, of my observations and experiences on the Thanksgiving Day \* in London.

\* For the recovery of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.



"For weeks before, all London was in a *steer*. Nor any wonder. Nothing of the kind has been seen previously by any living, save, perhaps, a very few still lingering on the earth who saw George III., about the close of last century, go in state to St. Paul's to return thanks to God for the recovery of his reason. So the Thanksgiving had all the interest of a great novelty. But more than that, it was a great solemnity, which found a response in the heart of every right-minded man and woman. Scoffers—all the ungodly crew who sneer at Providence and prayer—wisely held their tongues. Seated in the scorner's chair, they would have jibed at any *minister* who had proposed to call on God—on any one but Dr. Gull—or to acknowledge by an act of thanksgiving the power of prayer; but where a Queen had to be confronted,—brought face to face with earthly Majesty, where was the courage of men that speak against the heavens? Nowhere; it had oozed out at their finger-ends.

\* \* \* \* \*

"When we got into the 'city' proper, within Temple Bar, we had to show our tickets to the guards. Into this space the East End, with all its rags, and drunkenness, and blackguardism, and misery, and sin, had poured, and with roughs of both sexes the pavements were so crowded and packed that, save here and there where they pressed forward so that it became a pushing match between them and the police, it seemed hardly possible to move a foot. When I looked on the sea of faces, which made one think of the Communists of Paris and the horrible crimes done there a year ago, and also of the monsters of the older Revolution, with their famous cry of *Les prêtres à la lanterne*, I confess I looked with more than ordinary complacency on the marines, the guards and other soldiers, and the police, who lined the streets. There, in that fierce-looking crowd, with faces expressive of bad habits and bad passions, was a magazine of gunpowder which it needed but a spark, some sudden and strong excitement, to explode; and Church and State, Queen, Ministers of State, and Ministers of Religion, all things ancient, venerable, and holy, are blown into the air. Vice and misery were the prevailing characteristics of that sea of upturned faces. I never saw them collected in such overpowering masses before, and have no wish to see them again. Though the little fellows would not have been very effective in an *émeute*, yet at no part of the long lines of defenders along the route did I see a prettier sight than that formed of the boys from the soldier-boy schools and the training-ships. The one set dressed in the red uniform of the army, the other in the blue jackets of the navy, each youngster looking as full



of dignity and importance as if the fortunes of the day were in his hands, were a sight worth seeing; plucky little chaps they looked.

"I would linger long on the scenes of the streets; they were full of interest and entertainment; and we had abundance of time to make the survey, for, though we left Argyll Lodge at nine A.M., it was not till a quarter past eleven o'clock that our carriage reached St. Paul's. At the south gate we descended and threw ourselves into the stream of company that was pouring up; and after a long climb, getting occasional glimpses of the interior, we reached the extemporised gallery of the South Transept. . . .

"At length one o'clock struck, and hardly had people who knew our Gracious Lady's punctuality got time to get on 'the tip-toe of expectation,' when an organ behind us, drowning the sound of cannon, made us all start, and the whole mass and multitude below, as of one soul, rose to their feet. My eyes seemed to be the only sense I possessed, and they certainly looked on the most lofty and impressive sight that could be imagined—such as they had never seen before nor expect in this world to see again. There was an assembly of all 'the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men,' of the greatest nation on earth, and, before these, their Sovereign, come to do homage to the God of Heaven, acknowledge His providence, and render the tribute of her own and people's thanks to Him for having heard the voice of a mother's and a nation's prayer, sparing the son, husband, and father, at her side.

"It was a solemn act, that Thanksgiving, worthy of Him to whom it was rendered, and worthy of those who rendered it. It was most impressive to see her on her knees to whom all others kneel; and when I looked on that august company, assembled with the Sovereign of an empire on which the sun never sets, to acknowledge God and to do honour to His Divine Son, my mind by way of contrast reverted to the day when the powers of earth conspired together, and the streets of Jerusalem rang to the fierce cries of Crucify him! crucify him! and they hanged Him (before whom Queen and country were reverently bending) between two thieves on an accursed tree."

It was after he returned to Edinburgh, in March, that Dr. Guthrie's health first began to give way. An undeveloped gastric attack hung about him throughout that



month and the one following, which, though it did not prostrate him at the time, predisposed him to the rheumatic affection which, as summer advanced, aggravated the disease of the heart from which he had so long suffered. Still, when May arrived, he was so much better that he felt quite ready to go southward again, his primary object this time being to officiate in London at the marriage of his fifth son, Alexander, who had come for the purpose from San Francisco. This over, he returned to Edinburgh, to be present when Dr. Hanna performed a similar service for his youngest daughter, Helen.

"June 12th, 1872.

"Some days after Nelly's marriage, which, God willing, comes off next week, we will set off for Lochlee.

"About the middle of November Mrs. Guthrie and I set off for Rome; we shall return home about the beginning of May, 1873. We then embark in August for Yankeedom, to attend the Evangelical Alliance; and from the Eastern States we'll go to San Francisco, remaining there till March, '74. This we propose, ever seeking to remember the good old adage, 'Man proposes, but God disposes.' If I am spared to carry out these plans, I think I shall then cease my wanderings on the face of the earth, and live quietly till they carry me home." (*To Mrs. Wyld.*)

He went to Lochlee in June, as proposed. "Here I am in bed," he wrote from thence, "under what I may say is new to me, a rheumatic attack. I think I must have got it on the day of Nelly's marriage. Then I was wearied and worn out next day, attending Norman MacLeod's funeral, and the result of all these things *rheums*, which have got worse and worse, refusing to be arrested, far less removed."



While on various points which he regarded as important, Dr. Guthrie widely differed from Dr. MacLeod, their intercourse had been very cordial in later years; and though far from well, he made a special effort to show the last mark of respect in his power to the memory of his distinguished friend. Writing on June 25th, he first gives some details of the recent joyous occasion in his own family, and then continues:—"Next day carried me, alas! to a very different scene—to Norman MacLeod's funeral; the biggest Glasgow ever saw. Amid our marriage festivities and the gay and happy scene in our house, I could not but think of the grief, silence, and desolation in his; and how thankful we ought to be for the goodness, the riches of the goodness, long-suffering, and forbearance of Him who maketh one to differ from another. He was a man of singular generosity and geniality, and was, I believe, a genuine Christian and devout man. Gifted with brilliant talents, and bent on doing good, he will prove a loss in many respects, one especially to the Established Church, not easily supplied. . . . May good be wrought by this sudden and sad event! To me and others especially, but indeed to all, it is the voice of God, saying, 'Work, while it is called to-day. Be ye also ready.'"

Dr. Guthrie's visit to his Highland retreat that summer failed to recruit him as in former years. When the various members of his family came in succession to visit him in the Glen, he welcomed us with his old



sunny smile, and was, if possible, more tender and affectionate than ever ; but we could not hide from ourselves that much of the wonted *spring* was gone. He wandered to the river-side, but a few casts with the rod tired him. He planned our various mountain expeditions, but no longer proposed to join us. At length, on August 12th, he wrote:—" I had no idea of the tortures of rheumatics till now. In six weeks I have not had one decent night's rest, wakening usually almost every hour. In consequence, I have felt much languor and lassitude, and I have written myself out of all my autumn engagements, both in England and Ireland."

He was still, however, most unwilling to abandon one engagement he had formed—viz., to supply the station at Rome during the ensuing winter, 1872-73, at the request of the Free Church Continental Committee. He was to have for his colleagues that winter in the Free Church near the Porta del Popolo, two other eminent Scottish preachers, Dr. Macgregor and Dr. John Ker, the one of the Established, the other of the United Presbyterian Church. Nor was it until the middle of September that he gave up the plan as hopeless. The Lord had ordered otherwise, and, ere that winter ended, called him to a higher ministry and a wider fellowship of saints in the only "Eternal City."

Growing worse rather than better in the Highlands, it was resolved to try Buxton. The change of scene, the interest of visiting a new locality, and much pleasant intercourse there, were in themselves a benefit to him.



His colour was still fresh, and so he wrote from Buxton—

“ July 20th, 1872.

“ Dr. Shipton complimented me on my looks, as everybody does. Even old Ingram in Shetland last year did it, bawling out at the top of his stentorian lungs, ‘ You look wonderful for your age;’ adding, however, as became a man of ninety-seven, ‘ but you are only a boy compared with me!’

“ I have been writing two papers lately for the *Sunday Magazine*—one will appear next month, the other in October—on the London Cripple Homes. But, for cripples, this place *beats a’!* Old and young hobbling about, some on crutches, some by help of one stick, some of two; while others, making sorry work of it, affect to get along without any extraneous assistance; and not a few, bowing to the inevitable, move about in Bath chairs. For all that, there are multitudes of wholesome and, among the young ladies, not a few winsome-looking people, the sight of whom, with picturesque hills, fine gardens, and bands of music, makes this a pleasant residence.

“ The place is one of no mean natural beauty. We shall see to-morrow (Sunday) in what respect and to what extent it may be considered a garden of the Lord. I shall try most of the ‘ Wells’ to see how far these may be called ‘ medicinal,’ adapted to man’s spiritual diseases and state.”

All his letters from Buxton were in the same genial strain. He continued to be interested in everything and everybody:—

“ Buxton, July 26th, 1872.

“ Whom did we find but Dr. Keith? \* Charlie and I called on him between sermons on Sunday. There he was—a mighty man both physically and mentally. He was all alone, as bright and cheerful as a lark, with his Bible beside him, saying, ‘ I never weary!’ Next evening he was here, returning our visit, and pouring forth a flood of talk like an artesian well.

“ On Monday, when I went to the bath, one of the bathmen appeared particularly gracious. ‘ You were in our chapel yesterday,’ he said. ‘ Oh,’ I replied, ‘ are you a Methodist?’ ‘ Yes, and my father before me.’ I complimented him on the sermon and the singing, which was of the heartiest—with what

\* The Rev. Alex. Keith, D.D., formerly minister of the Free Church at St. Cyrus, author of many well-known works on Prophecy.



vehemence they praised the Lord! But what amused me was the complacency with which the honest man brought me down to his level, or elevated me to the honourable height of his. Telling me that so and so was inquiring for me, I remarked that I did not know any one of the name. 'Ah, Doctor,' he replied, 'I fancy it is with you as with me—many know us whom we don't know.' "

" *July 30th, 1872.*

" With such sensations as Livingstone's, when he, lying on the ground, had a lion gnawing at his arm, I tell the doctor and others here how I have been suffering, and how, like the woman of the Gospel, I am rather worse than better of Buxton drinks and douches. They smile satisfaction, are quite delighted with one's doleful miseries and recital of severer pain and new places attacked, saying, 'Ah, that shows the waters are doing well,'—I being ready, under such circumstances, to take up the words of Job, and say to such friends, 'Miserable comforters are ye all!'

" However, I should begin this letter otherwise than after this grumbling fashion; having, notwithstanding I may have awoke some six or seven times, enjoyed the best night's rest I have had for a month past last night. . . . Anne \* came here on Saturday, and remained with us, like a gleam of sunshine, till yesterday morning. . . .

" We have just returned from Poole's Cave, one of the greatest natural curiosities I have seen, and which it were worth while any one's going fifty miles, or more, to see. It is so called because it was the asylum of an outlaw of that name in the time of Henry VI. I asked the lad who was our guide whether it was Poole of 'The Synopsis' that lived there and gave his name to the place? He was not sure!

" I have had a call again from the Methodists, proposing now that, instead of preaching in their chapel, I should, for the sake of fresh air to myself and accommodation to the public, occupy the pavilion in the gardens, which would accommodate some two thousand people. Of course I declined. I would have liked to preach, and for this among other reasons—to prevent the natives from confounding Presbyterianism with the heresies of the Socinian 'shop' here, called the 'Presbyterian Chapel.' "

On his return to Edinburgh he both looked and felt better; but although the pain of the external muscles

\* His daughter, Mrs. Williamson.



was nearly gone, the rheumatic attack of summer had done its work, by permanently injuring the texture of the heart itself. From the date of this attack, its action became continuously enfeebled.

In August, Dr. Guthrie returned from Buxton to Lochlee for a few weeks, and there fulfilled his two last engagements,—the one being to take the chair at a temperance social meeting and amateur concert got up by his family for the Glen people; and the other, to preach in the Free Church there, on Sunday the 25th of the same month.

His delight in preaching remained with him to the last. In the spring of that year he had written to Dr. Norman MacLeod, in the last communication which passed between them:—"I would prefer above all things else to give more of what time remains to me to the preaching of the Gospel; and by going here and there to preach for worthy men, to help them to get rid of debts that burden their churches, or promote schemes of Christian usefulness which they and their congregations are engaged in." The audience he addressed on 25th August, 1872, in the little Free Church of Lochlee, presented, by an interesting coincidence, an illustration of the hold his pulpit power gave him over classes the most diverse. Sitting there almost side by side with the weather-beaten shepherds and simple peasants from the neighbouring farms, were a Prince of the Blood,\* and the present Lord

\* H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh; then on a visit to the Earl of Dalhousie. Writing from Lochlee the previous year, 19th August, 1871, Dr. Guthrie mentions: "I dined with Prince Alfred the other day at the Lodge—very frank, easy, pleasant manners."



Chancellor of England. "I am always thankful for this," he wrote of a somewhat similar occasion years before, "that when I get into the pulpit all men look much on the same level."

His text was, "The just shall live by faith" (Heb. x. 38). That sermon in Lochlee was the last he ever preached; and when he descended from the pulpit he had closed a forty years' ministry.

Very soon after his return to Edinburgh from the Highlands he was obliged finally to abandon his winter plans for preaching in Rome.

"I have felt," he wrote on 18th September, "that though the rheumatism retired, my strength, which it 'weakened in the way,' did not return; this did not look or promise well; but, a week or so ago, worse symptoms began to show themselves, and difficulty of breathing supervened; and this, instead of abating, has been growing worse, having become so bad, that last night, for instance, I awoke some fifty times with the sensations almost of a man who is suffocating.

"Dr. Cumming's verdict is that there is as yet no water in the chest, or pericardium; but the texture of the heart has suffered damage, more than existed before the rheumatic attack. He hopes, with time and care, my heart may recover such tone at least as it had before I was attacked with rheumatism—but it may be otherwise; things may get worse: and, no doubt, though he did not say so in as many words, they in that case would run on to a fatal issue."

His own opinion was that the "beginning of the end" had come. He lost not a day in making all needful arrangements regarding his worldly affairs, making some changes in his will, &c. He seemed to hear the call, "Set thy house in order, for thou must die." These arrangements were just completed, when a sudden attack



of congestion of the lungs, in the last week of September, threatened an immediate execution of the sentence. Besides Dr. Cumming, his ordinary medical adviser, he was now attended by Sir Robert Christison and Dr. Warburton Begbie, and for a week his family and friends were kept in the most anxious suspense as to the issue. The inquiries at his house necessitated daily bulletins to be affixed to his gate. The daily press conveyed these to their readers all over the country, and the widespread concern and sympathy touched him greatly.

If he had not known it before, he would have learned now, how deep was the personal affection cherished for him by multitudes. From this attack he made a wonderful rally, and in ten days the apprehensions of immediate danger passed away.

*From the DUCHESS OF ARGYLL.*

"INVERARAY, October 8th, 1872.

"MY DEAR DR. GUTHRIE,—This is only a line to tell you how much our thoughts are with you, and with your wife. You must *not* write: when Mrs. Guthrie can give us a comfortable account, I hope she will. You know, I trust, what a delight it is to us to remember all occasions of intercourse with you. We thank God for them.

"I feel much for the distress the attacks of breathlessness must give you. But I will not trouble you with many words. May God give you more ease and His own peace, my dear kind friend.

"With much affection, yours very sincerely,

"E. ARGYLL."

*From DEAN RAMSAY.*

"AINSLIE PLACE, EDINBURGH, October 27th, 1872.

"DEAREST DR. GUTHRIE,—You have been very ill, my good friend—near the gate we all have to pass. At such times, when we are approaching closer to the realities of the faith, I cannot



help thinking that the externals of Church Order and Church Service become comparatively insignificant, and we ought to look for comfort and support more sure than the external modifications of the Faith. I trust, dear friend, you experienced that consolation in your day of weakness which you had pointed out to so many in your day of vigour.

"I am older than you by several years, and am feeling the weight of age and infirmity.

"By-and-by, might you just receive for five minutes

"Your old and truly affectionate friend,

"E. B. RAMSAY."

"October 30th, 1872.

"MY DEAR MR. DEAN.—I have received many sweet, tender, and Christian letters touching my late serious illness, but among them all none I value more, or almost so much as your own.

"How perfect the harmony in our views as to the petty distinctions around which—sad and shame to think of it—such fierce controversies have raged. I thank God that I, like yourself, have never attached much importance to these externals, and have had the fortune to be regarded as rather loose on such matters. We have just, by God's grace, anticipated the views and aspects they present on a death-bed.

"I must tell you how you helped us to pass many a weary, restless hour. After the Bible had been read to me in a low monotone, when I was seeking sleep and could not find it, a volume of my published sermons was tried, and sometimes very successfully, as a soporific. I was familiar with them, and yet they presented as much novelty as to divert my mind from my troubles. And what if this failed? Then came the 'Reminiscences' to entertain me, and while away the long hours when all hope of getting sleep's sweet oblivion was given up.

"So your book was one of my many mercies; but oh how great in such a time the unspeakable mercy of a full, free, present salvation!"

Another letter of sympathy and congratulation he received was in the form of a "round robin," signed by the Rev. T. Binney of London and a number of other friends, met at the house of Sir Titus Salt, in Yorkshire. In reply, he wrote to Miss Salt:—"23rd



October, 1872. . . . I was brought low, but am now so far myself again that I can write a brief note. The ship which was thrown on her beam ends is slowly but steadily righting herself. The doctors think I may have to go to the south of Europe in our severe spring months; but I have so often, in God's good providence and through strength of a powerful constitution, cheated the doctors, that I hope I may not have to leave 'my ain countree.' Little wearies me, so I must stop."

Our fond anticipations of a return to moderately good health were not to be fulfilled. The digestive system now began to fail, in sympathy with the heart, and a tedious winter of weakness and weariness lay before him. His buoyancy of spirits carried him through the day; but sleeplessness, or, at best, rest procured by the use of sedatives (chiefly chloral), combined with an indescribable sensation of sinking or faintness when about to fall into sleep, made him dread the very approach of night. For four months continuously, it was necessary for some of his family and attendants to sit in the room with him through the night, trying to beguile weariness and induce repose by reading to him in a monotonous tone, or by softly singing a psalm or hymn.\* "It was a blessed and is rather a curious thing," he writes on December 7th, "that singing should have had such a happy influence on me, who am so 'timmer-tuned,' as they say. As Arnot† once said, I may say, 'though I

\* No. 136 of "Hymns Ancient and Modern," beginning "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty," he asked for oftener than any other.

† Rev. W. Arnot, editor of the *Family Treasury*.



never composed music, music has often composed me !<sup>\*</sup> Sometimes, however, I get off the rails, and am not to be charmed by the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely. So it has happened this morning ; and here am I seated, in an easy-chair, rolled up in blankets, with 'Noah'\* at my feet, before a blazing fire, dictating to Clementina a letter to you between four and five of the morning."

Still, we hoped against hope. Could we have foreseen that there was to be no recovery, we might have been tempted to wish that the time of weariness and distress had been shortened ; so distressing was it to witness the protracted struggle between a mortal malady and a powerful constitution, the former ever gaining the advantage ; to see a genial spirit fettered to a disabled frame—existence itself becoming at times a burden. But, through it all, "he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible."

The return of his fourth son from Buenos Ayres in January, 1873, after an absence of six years, affected him very much, while he was rejoiced to welcome the young wife whom he brought with him from South America, and whom Dr. Guthrie used to present to his visitors as "a lady who has never seen snow." The tedium of his seclusion was much lightened, too, by visits of friends, and he greatly relished the conversation and prayers of brethren in the ministry—Dr. Duff, Dr. Candlish, Dr. Blaikie, Dr. Charles Brown, Dr. Hanna, Mr. Philip (his successor in St. John's

\* A favourite white Cuban terrier.



Free Church), Mr. Robertson of Newington, and others, who visited and prayed with him.

Through the winter, he continued to take the liveliest interest in all that was happening either in the Church or in the world. A visitor going in on him during the earlier part of the day would have found him sitting up in his bed (now moved to the drawing-room), his Bible on the pillow beside him, and the morning newspaper in his hand; a favourite green parouquet preening its feathers as it perched on the rail at the foot of his couch, while his white dog lay beside him; at such times his eye was so keen, his voice so full and strong, and the stream of his conversation so racy and rapid, that it was scarce possible to realise how weary the night had been, and his sleep how sorely broken.

He continued almost daily to extend his Autobiography, to correct proofs for the *Sunday Magazine*, and dictate letters to his friends. In one of these he sent a minute account of his condition to his fifth son, in San Francisco, from which we extract the concluding sentences:—

“ December 3rd, 1872.

“ I get up about ten o'clock, and in favourable weather have a drive in the shut or open carriage, as circumstances suggest. Besides this exercise, I now take one or two turns each day in the garden, and am able, by help of a stick, and taking it very slowly, to walk from the front door to the bower, and from that round the back of the house to the top of the garden. This blows and finishes me for the time. Though that is a poor achievement, it is a great deal more than I was able to do some time ago, and less than I hope to do ere long.

“ We have all cause to be thankful that I have been brought back, I may say, from the gates of death. May it teach us to



be mindful of our latter end, which it is so easy to forget amid the pleasures and pursuits of the world. My condition when at the worst was a striking proof of the necessity for attending, while we are in the enjoyment of health and strength, to the things that concern our peace. There is no time more unfit for that, than when the body is suffering pain or agony, and the mind is weakened, and bodily suffering engrosses all one's thoughts. So, let us give heed to the saying, 'Be ye also ready.' To be ready is the only safe state for another world, besides being the happiest one in this. Pray God to sanctify this warning and affliction to one and all of us; that it may not have yielded pain only, but much profit.

"We are rejoiced to hear of the business you are carrying on. Let us praise the Lord for His goodness, and consecrate all to Him. To be a successful merchant is a good thing, but to be a Christian one a better.

"May the gracious God our Saviour have Mary and you in His safe and holy keeping. To His care and loving-kindness I commend you both.

"Your very affectionate father,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

"December 25th, 1872.

"MY DEAR MISS BEEVER,—If it was at this season of the year that our Saviour was born, it has been by contrast that the scene in the fields of Bethlehem has been presented most forcibly to my mind, as seeking sleep and finding none, I lay in bed, listening to the howling of the storm. This is one of the most abnormal seasons in the memory of man, for rain and tempest, and weather that now, in the very depth and heart of winter, looks like genial spring. I do not know that it is good for health; but certainly it is very enjoyable for the crows that I watch from my bed in the drawing-room here, wheeling through the air in joyous majesty, some broods of blackbirds that go hopping over the grass the live-long day, and an innumerable company of sparrows, that, bred in the ivy that mantles many of my walls, hold a sort of parliament, *palater-thing*, or public assembly, in the venerable thorn-tree which stands before my door, as the chief ornament of this place.

"Though the weather here be comparatively genial, I am wearying to get away to the south of England, because there, at St. Leonards-on-Sea, where I have taken lodgings, I can spend much more time in the open air than I can do in Edinburgh."



He arrived at St. Leonard's on January 31st, 1873. and from a bright, cheerful house in Eversfield Place he looked out with all his old interest on the sea. The sound of the waves, as they broke on the beach close beneath his windows, delighted him, and he enjoyed a daily airing in a Bath chair or carriage along the shore ; but his debility continued to increase so much, that at length he had to use a carrying-chair in passing from his sitting-room to the conveyance at the door. As the muscular power failed, the nervous system seemed to become morbidly sensitive. "The very quality," was his remark, with reference to his emotional temperament, "which used to be the source of my power, is now the seat of my weakness."

In passing through London, he had been visited by Dr. Walshe, eminent for his acquaintance with cardiac maladies. Dr. Walshe did not anticipate any immediate change in his condition. To this he refers, writing to his eldest son, from St. Leonards, on February 3rd—

"I don't know that the verdict of Dr. Walshe on my case gave me any such pleasure as it might give my family. I have no pleasure in looking forward to living through such years as the last months have been. For a considerable portion and proportion of these hours, I may say, the days have come when I have no pleasure in them—pleasure other than the prospect of the oblivion which sleep and the bed afford. But death and the grave would do the same ; and with some good hope through grace of the favour and forgiveness of God, and of a saving interest in Christ's love and work, a long life presents no charm, and a sudden death no terrors to me.

"Not that I wish to be parted from a family amid whom I have enjoyed an amount of happiness that seldom falls to the lot of man ; but my prevailing and supreme wish is that I and



they, children and children's children, may all find ourselves safely housed at last and together in the Kingdom of Heaven."

On the 10th, he dictated a letter to Dr. Cumming, of Ainslie Place, Edinburgh, in which he tells of an increased tendency to dropsy, now too apparent, and asks—

"With an appetite rather lessening than growing, with ability to walk about slowly abandoning me, and receding without any such promise of return as the tide gives when it leaves the shore, should I not regard this symptom as a precursor of the end? and that, perhaps—through the accumulation of water over the whole system—not very remote end? . . . No doubt, it matters little to a man *where*, but everything *how*, he dies; and it is even of more importance still, not how he *dies*, but how he *lives*. Still, if I were to die now, or soon, of this malady, I would rather do so under your than any other body's charge; at home than abroad, in the bosom of my family than among strangers."

When driving slowly through the old part of Hastings, he stopped to chat with the Sussex fisher folk, and purchase zoophytes, *algæ*, and other specimens of natural history, prepared by a poor widow there. Along with the letter just quoted, he sent to Mrs. Cumming a prepared specimen of the young of the skate fish, varnished and mounted on cardboard, in which the eyes and mouth present a grotesque resemblance to a distorted human face. The short note accompanying this oddity was the last he ever wrote with his own hand—

"20, EVERSFIELD PLACE, ST. LEONARDS, February 10th, 1873.

"MY DEAR MRS. CUMMING,—There is a woman here who keeps a sort of marine-curiosity shop: to keep you humble, I send you herewith a specimen, according to Darwin and



his system of development, of one of our remote and early ancestors, which I purchased of this worthy wife.

"Yours very affectionately,

"THOMAS GUTHRIE."

The gravity of the first communication and the playfulness of the second may seem in strange juxtaposition, but the combination was entirely characteristic of the writer.

The last time he was able to be in the open air was on the 16th of February. It was the Lord's day; and in the morning, with Mrs. Guthrie, he accompanied some of his family on their way to worship at the United Presbyterian Church of Silverhill, two miles from St. Leonards. Driving slowly back he reached Eversfield Place much exhausted, and, after being carried in his chair into the house, went at once to bed, scarcely ever to leave it again.

Ten memorable days, however, yet remained. All the members of his family who could reach him, were now summoned; and, for some days before he died, eight of his ten children were around his bedside.

It was in keeping with his own catholic spirit, that when, in the providence of God, he was shut out by distance from further intercourse with brethren of his own denomination in Edinburgh, he should have his closing days at St. Leonards soothed by servants of God in other Churches there, not one of whom he had previously known. The Rev. T. Vores, Vicar of St. Mary-in-the-Castle, the Rev. J. Griffin,\* of the Congregational,

\* In a note written by Mr. Griffin after Dr. Guthrie's departure, he says: "I esteemed it one of the most precious privileges of my life to



and the Rev. G. Carr, of the United Presbyterian Church, visited and prayed with him frequently.

As the veil which hides the other world grows more transparent to the believer, his intercourse with God becomes closer and more constant. The room in which Dr. Guthrie lay communicated by folding doors (one of which stood generally open) with the apartment where his family sat, and we could not but observe how much of his time was now spent in prayer. We frequently overheard him, when alone, giving audible utterance to his fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Most touching and impressive were the expressions of deep penitence that then fell from his lips, mingled with petitions for a further realisation of Christ's preciousness and for more love towards Him.

His natural dislike to speak much of his inner experience and spiritual emotions passed in great measure away as the end drew near. A few, and these but a few, of his expressions were, unknown to him, taken down at the time he gave utterance to them:—"Thank God," he said, "my tongue has been unloosed." While we were beside him, he would break out in the midst of ordinary conversation into ejaculatory prayer,—using this one frequently: "O Most Mighty and Most Merciful, have

have been with your venerated father again and again during the last days of his noble and God-honouring life. . . . We shall never forget those moments of prayer at his bedside, and the sweet, soft hymning of his family around him."



compassion on me, once a great sinner, and now a great sufferer!"

Bodily distress was more or less continuous; not indeed in the form of acute pain, but of what he himself termed "sore oppression." "Death is slowly mining away here in the dark," he said one day:—"I could almost envy a warrior struck down by a battle-axe in the midst of the fight. The only part of the English Church Service I could never join in was the prayer in the Litany, 'from sudden death, good Lord, deliver us.'" On another occasion:—"I often thought and hoped in past years, that God would have granted me a translation like Chalmers' and Andrew Thomson's; but it would seem now this is not to be the way of it." Stretching out his arm with force on the 18th, he exclaimed, "Oh, the power yet in that right arm! I doubt it presents the prospect of a long fight; and if so, Lord, help me to turn my dying hours to better purpose than my preaching ones have been!" On the 19th:—"Oh that I could do some good in dying, and that this sad scene may be blessed to my family! But, were I to lie here all the days of Methuselah, I would not think it anything when I remember the sufferings of my Saviour."

"I have often witnessed death-beds," he said,—  
"I have often described them; but I had no conception, till now, of what hard work dying really is. Had I known this years ago as I know it now, I would have felt far more for others in similar circumstances than I did." From this, he passed on to speak of our Saviour's



personal experience of suffering and death, and of His having thus become an High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

"*Vanitas vanitatum!*" he exclaimed, one day. "A living dog is better than a dead lion; and yet," he added, after a pause, "why should we wonder that this complaint of mine seems now past remedy? In '48, Begbie, Simpson, and Miller all considered my usefulness ended—my life probably near a close,—ay, that is five-and-twenty years ago. I have outlived every one of them; and though I have nothing to boast of, I have great reason to bless God that, during these years, I have been able to do something for God's glory and my suffering fellow-creatures. Need we wonder it should come to this now?"

Every aspect of Christ's character was precious to him. His chief complaint was, that his affection towards the Redeemer was not warmer. "I have not wanted confidence in Christ," were his words on the 20th; "but I have not loved Him as I ought." Then, after a pause—"as He loved me." On the 22nd, in conversation with Admiral Baillie Hamilton (an Episcopalian friend of former years, who visited and prayed with him daily), he mentioned the story of an old Scotch minister, who proposed to keep back from the Lord's table a young woman, whose knowledge he found grievously defective. Rising to go, the girl burst into tears. "It's true, sir, I canna speak for Him, but I think I could die for Him." "So," said Dr. Guthrie, "I feel



that though I cannot speak of Him as He deserves, yet if I were to lie here a thousand years, I would think nothing of it, if it were to honour Christ." Admiral Hamilton then knelt down by his bedside, and prayed fervently. Dr. Guthrie held out his hand to him as he rose, and said, "Thank you, my dear friend, thank you. May your prayers return abundantly into your own bosom." He derived very great comfort too from the converse and prayers of the Rev. W. Welsh, of whom, in one of his letters at a former date, he writes:—"Mr. Welsh, my son-in-law, is one of my many mercies; and, indeed, when I look around me and see the misfortunes and calamities that gather like clouds over many families, I feel how thankful I ought to be for the kindness of God in my household relations."

Reference being made to some recent speculations with respect to the sphere and influence of prayer, he expressed in the strongest terms his dissent from these, as both unscriptural and presumptuous, ending with, "Ha, these advanced thinkers! they have not robbed me of my comfort." He dwelt much and often on the paternal aspect of God's character, and spoke with thankfulness of the last sermon to which he had ever listened, in his son's church at Liberton, from the words, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" "I am a father," he added, "and I know what a father's heart is: my love to my children is no more to the infinite love of



God, than one drop of water to that boundless ocean out there" (pointing to the sea, visible from the windows of the adjoining room). "I have no sympathy," he said, on another occasion, "with Broad Church views, but there *is* a sense in which I am a broad Churchman. There are some men who have no faith in the salvation of any beyond their own narrow sect. My belief, on the contrary, is that in the end there will be a vastly larger number saved than we have any conception of. What sort of earthly government would that be, where more than half the subjects were in prison? I cannot believe that the government of God will be like that."

One evening, the conversation turning to a Church question, the name of a public man was mentioned who had opposed Dr. Guthrie's views with acrimony; on this, with a voice full of emotion, he said, "If any man who ever spoke or wrote against me were to come in just now at that door, I would be most willing to shake hands with him."

His natural courtesy and charm of manner remained with him to the last. Expressing regret at what he termed "the trouble I am giving to you all," with a gleam of humour on his face, he said, "You remember how that old scoundrel, Charles II., begged his courtiers to excuse him for being 'such an unconscionable time in dying.'" He was peculiarly touched by the unwearied attentions of a young woman from Argyllshire, who had come from Scotland along with the family, and acted



latterly as his sick-nurse. "Affection," he said one day, after she had done some kindly office for him, "is very sweet; and it's all one from what quarter it comes, whether from this Highland lassie or from a duchess; just as to a thirsty man cold water is as grateful from a spring on the hill-side as from a marble fountain." The inquiries were very numerous which we received from all quarters by telegraph, as well as by the ordinary posts, during the last week of his illness. On the evening of the 21st, Her Majesty sent a telegram of inquiry and sympathy from Windsor.\* When told next day of the Queen's message, he said, "It is most kind." When he heard how the newspapers over the kingdom had notices from day to day of his condition—"I give God thanks for the telegraph: it will serve as a call to God's people to mind me in their prayers."

His love to his own family seemed to flow forth more abundantly as life was ebbing away. Once and again, he gave thanks to God aloud for his domestic mercies, and that his wife and he had been spared the pangs some Christian parents of their acquaintance had experienced in connection with their children. Looking round on the group who surrounded his bed one evening, he went back with grateful memory to the many happy family gather-

\* The message, sent through the Duke of Argyll, who was at Windsor at the time, was in these words: "The Queen desires to know how your father is, and feels much for his suffering." Her Majesty was pleased to manifest continued interest in Dr. Guthrie's state, and received information from the telegrams of Admiral Hamilton to her private Secretary, Colonel Ponsonby.



ings beneath his roof in Edinburgh, at Christmas and other seasons of reunion, and then said, "These were pleasant times; but, ah! my dear folk, how much happier will it be when we meet in our Father's house up yonder, where there are no death-beds, and no partings!" He charged each of us to meet him in glory, and sent a faithful and loving message to his son, absent in California. "Tell him in all circumstances to stand up for Christ." These words, "stand up for Christ," he repeated twice, and with great emphasis.

When two of his sons were lifting him up on the pillows, he looked round to them and said, "I am just as helpless now in your arms as you once were in mine." On another occasion, when doing him a similar service, he seemed suddenly to recall the saying of the boy who had been dug out alive from the ruins of a fallen house in the Canongate of Edinburgh. Quoting the boy's words, with a smile, he called out to us, "Heave awa', lads, I'm no' dead yet!" A favourite granddaughter, three years old, Anita Williamson, had been brought by her parents from Cheshire that he might see her. It was a happy thought. The arrival of the child in the saddened dwelling acted like a cordial in his weakness and weariness. Although before she came he kept his eyes generally shut, and his expression had assumed an unwonted gravity, whenever he was told Anita had entered the room, he would look up, and, the old smile passing like a gleam of sunshine over his face, he would say, "My bonnie lamb! lift her up beside



me:" then having kissed her, it was a touching picture to see the little child chafing her grandfather's chilly hand.

Singing continued to soothe him. We generally chose some sacred melody; but one evening, about two days before he died, he asked for some Scotch songs, especially "John Anderson my jo, John," the "Laird of Cockpen," and the "Land o' the Leal." A psalm or hymn sung in soft chorus to the piano in the adjoining room he often asked for, and in reply to the question what he would like, he would say, "Just give me a bairn's hymn."

The calmness with which he contemplated his approaching change surprised every one. He watched its symptoms almost as if he had been himself an onlooker by the death-bed of another. More than once he asked Dr. Underwood, of Hastings, his medical attendant, to tell him how long he judged he was likely to last, and whether towards the close *coma* might supervene? During the last week, as the grey light came in each morning, he called for a hand mirror, and carefully scanned his countenance to see if he could detect any noticeable change in its aspect. He would sometimes even startle us by saying, "Look at me, and see if you think there is anything cadaverous yet in my expression." Finding his sight becoming dim:—"Ah! this reminds me of a story I was struck by. When Dr. Adam, the rector of the Edinburgh High School, was dying, and no longer able to see, the old man's mind wan-



dered; he imagined himself in his class-room, and called aloud,—‘Now, boys, you may go. It’s growing dark!’”

As one of his daughters was sitting with him on the 18th, he told her he had begun to see two spots in the pattern of the wall-paper opposite his bed, where he knew there used to be only one. She tried to make light of it, and said it would pass away. “No,” he replied, “I take it as a symptom of death’s approach. It minds me of the land-birds lighting on the shrouds, that tell the weary mariner he is nearing the desired haven.” On Admiral Hamilton’s coming into his room with the remark, “Do you know I think you are looking better this morning, Doctor,” he replied, “Ah! then a good man comes with evil tidings.”

He spoke of the opening of his Ragged Schools, twenty-five years previously, and of his early associates in that work, dwelling most affectionately on the late Miss Elliott Lockhart. “There’s no one I look forward with greater pleasure to meeting in heaven than her.” Again on the 18th, referring to the one breach in his family circle (the death of his infant son in 1856), he said,—“Johnnie was a sweet lamb, though he didna like me; he was long ailing, and aye clung to his mother. Perhaps, the greatest trial in all my life was when I lifted the clay-cold body and laid it in his little coffin in that front room in Lauriston Lane. He has gone before us all, though the youngest. Ay, though his little feet never ran on this earth, I think I see him running to meet me at the golden gate.” In regard to the question



sometimes raised, whether believers would recognise friends in heaven, he remarked,—“I have great sympathy with the old woman, who, when some one doubted the likelihood of her recognising her departed husband in the better world, exclaimed, ‘Do you really think we will be greater fools in heaven than we are here?’”

On the same day, he insisted on being lifted out of bed, and sitting up in an easy-chair before the fire. He then desired that all the family should be summoned; and when we had assembled round him, he asked us to pray with him, shortly, one after the other. He then desired each of us to kiss him (an act quite unusual with him); and, though he did not say it in so many words, we judged that he meant this to be a special solemn leave-taking.

Friday, the 21st, after the barber had finished shaving him in the forenoon, and was about to leave the room, Dr. Guthrie made a sign that he should be recalled, and, opening his eyes, stretched out to him his feeble hand while he thanked him, and in an earnest whisper, added, “God bless you, my friend.”

On that same day, in the afternoon, Mr. Vores visited him. Dr. Guthrie was not able to speak loud enough to be heard at any distance from the bed. He therefore whispered to one of his sons, “Tell him my journey is nearly ended. Ask him to pray that I may have a speedy entrance into heaven, and that we may have a happy meeting there, where we shall no longer have



to proclaim Christ, but where we shall enjoy Him for ever and ever."

Sabbath, the 23rd February, was his last day on earth. His weakness was now so great that the doctor could scarce detect any pulse at the wrist, and marvelled at his tenacity of life. With this condition of body, the mind remained strong as ever. In the morning he put a medical inquiry to Dr. Underwood, and, as he was leaving, affectionately besought a blessing on his physician. While one of his sons was reading to him the verse in the fourth hymn of the Scotch collection, beginning—

"Hell and the grave combined their force  
To hold our Lord in vain,"

Dr. Guthrie interrupted him at the first line, saying, "That expression is unfortunate. It was not Hell into which our Lord descended, but 'Hades'—the state of the dead."

As the bells of St. Leonards and Hastings were ringing for morning service, it comforted him to be reminded that prayers were to be offered, that day, on his behalf in many of the churches and chapels in both towns, as well as in many other places. Lying quietly in the course of the afternoon, he was heard to say, "A brand plucked



from the burning!" A tender Christian letter, which had just come from his friend and neighbour in Edinburgh, Rev. James Robertson, of Newington, being read to him, he said, "Send him a message from me—the kindest thing you can say."

He had himself a dread that, from the original strength of his constitution, and the nature of his malady, the *act of dying* might be accompanied by distressing circumstances; but his prayer to be spared from these was most graciously answered. About ten o'clock on that Sunday evening, in reply to an inquiry, he responded in a whisper, but with all his old promptness and decision, "*Certainly.*"

This was the last word he uttered. Shortly thereafter he fell into broken sleep. As midnight approached, his breathing became noticeably easier than it had been for days, and we began to ask in whispers, "Can there be a change for the better?" Some of the family then retired to rest, while Dr. Guthrie continued to sleep quietly, supported by his faithful Highland nurse, one of his daughters watching by his side. About two in the morning, the maid whispered, "Surely the wrinkles on the brow are smoothing out!" It was no fancy; the whole countenance wore an expression of profound calm, and the traces of age, work, and weariness were literally passing away. But, though he still breathed, the gathering pallor told that life was ebbing fast. The other members of the family were hastily summoned, and we commended the passing spirit



into the Redeemer's hands. Just then he left us ; but so gentle the departure, that the moment could scarcely be noted when the sleep of exhausted nature passed into the sleep of death.

“ I HEARD A VOICE FROM HEAVEN, SAYING UNTO ME, WRITE, BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD FROM HENCEFORTH : YEA, SAITH THE SPIRIT, THAT THEY MAY REST FROM THEIR LABOURS ; AND THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM.”

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The remains were conveyed from St. Leonards to Edinburgh, on Wednesday morning, and interred on Friday, the 28th of February.

Unless when Dr. Chalmers and Sir James Simpson were carried to the grave, Edinburgh had seen no such funeral in this generation. The magistrates in their robes of office, and various other public bodies, clergymen of every Protestant denomination in Scotland, representatives of the Wesleyan Methodists from England, and of the Waldensian Church from Italy, passed to the Grange Cemetery through a living vista of 30,000 spectators. But the most touching feature in all the procession was the presence of 230 children from the



Original Ragged Schools, many of whom might truly have said, as one little girl of their number was overheard to tell, "He was all the father I ever knew."

"The city weeps : with slow and solemn show  
 The dark-plumed pomp sails through the crowded way,  
 And walls and roofs are topped with thick display  
 Of waiting eyes that watch the wending woe.  
 What man was here, to whose last fateful march,  
 The marshalled throng its long-drawn convoy brings,  
 Like some great conqueror's when victory swings  
 Her vans o'er flower-spread path and wreathed arch ?  
 No conqueror's kind was here, nor conqueror's kin,  
 But a strong-breasted, fervid-hearted man,  
 Who from dark dens redeemed, and haunts of sin,  
 The city waifs, the loose unfathered clan  
 With prouder triumph than when wondering Rome  
 Went forth, all eyes, to bring great Cæsar home."\*

At the burial-place, prayer was offered by the Rev. Dr. Blaikie, and then the children of the Ragged School sang the hymn, "There is a happy land, far, far away." When the clear voices of these rescued ones rose on the still air, not many eyes were dry. The hymn ended, and the grave closed, the Superintendent of the schools led forward a little boy and girl who laid a wreath upon the green sod.

On the following Lord's day, funeral sermons were preached in St. John's Free Church by Dr. Candlish in the morning, and by Mr. Philip, the surviving pastor, in the afternoon. No one who heard Dr. Candlish that day could have anticipated that, ere that year had run, he too was to be summoned to his rest and his

\* By Professor John Stuart Blackie.



reward. All the more impressive now the words he then uttered—

“Friend and brother! Comrade in the fight! Companion in tribulation!. Farewell! But not for ever. May my soul, when my hour comes, be with thine!”

**THE END.**



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1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.









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